

iDEGENERATE!

ISSUE 3 - 2003



DRONE RECORDS GENOCIDE ORGAN GLASS THROAT RECORDINGS ISOMER KNIFELADDER LAW
MILITIA PROPERGOL ROBERT X. RRRECORDS SICKNESS SLOGUN TABULA RASA / VICTIMS FROM TABULA
TERRA SANCTA TOTE STADT TROUM WARCOM MEDIA + ARTICLES & TONS OF REVIEWS

POWER ELECTRONICS NOISE AMBIENT INDUSTRIAL

iDEGENERATE!

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DEGENERATE #3

August 2003

Print run of 500 copies

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LAY-OUT

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REVIEWS FOR #4

We accept material that fits the style of Degenerate (power electronics, noise, ambient, industrial...) and can e-mail or send you the review, but we do not obligate ourselves to send out free magazines to anyone who has sent us promo material for reviews. Vinyl, CD, CDr, tape, VHS, MD, printed matter.

ADVERTISEMENTS FOR #4

If you're interested in running an advertisement in Degenerate #4, please contact us for prices, exact sizes and deadlines.

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EDITORIAL

It's starting to seem that every new issue of Degenerate faces some unexpected delays. This time finishing the layout took very long due to serious computer problems and that's why the visual content of this issue is pretty basic. (Especially since after writing this editorial I had to re-design some of the layout due to the printer's request.) Hopefully next time around things will go at least a bit smoother.

This issue sees several new contributors in the Degenerate ranks and most notably we received loads of material from Richard Stevenson which was originally intended to appear in a now cancelled issue of Spectrum magazine. There are also almost twice the amount of reviews compared to previous issues, so this one should have been worth the wait. We are still looking for people interested in contributing with interviews, articles, reviews etc., so if you think you have something worthwhile to offer Degenerate, don't hesitate to get in contact. Our thanks go to the contributors in this issue!

The idea of including a compilation CD with a future issue of Degenerate has been talked about ever since the first issue, but for one reason or another it has not happened. Depending on which artists we get lined up for interviews in Degenerate #4, there is a good possibility that for the first time there will be a compilation CD coming with the magazine, containing tracks from all interviewed artists. As always, nothing is 100% sure, but we're working on it.

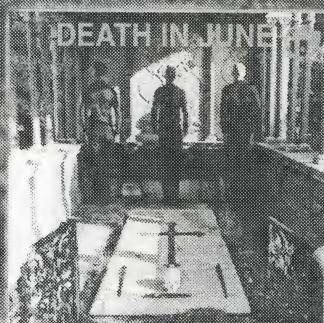
As stated above, there will definitely be a fourth issue of Degenerate, but as schedules tend to stretch, there's no point in talking about any exact release dates other than it will be out next year. As always, we welcome any feedback and comments on this issue as well as constructive ideas for future issues!

- J. Mattila / Kaos Kontrol, September 2003

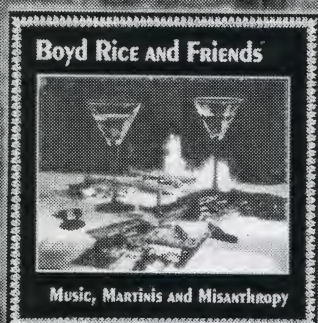


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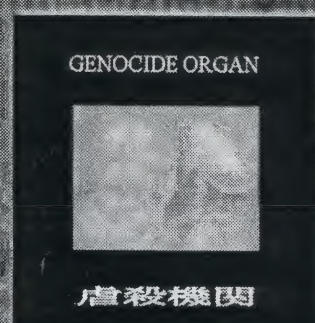
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"Nada" CD
BAD 99CD 13



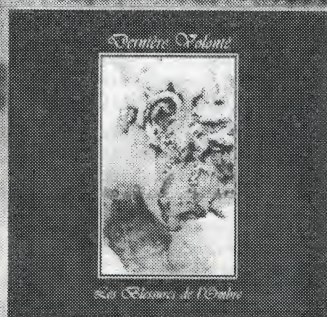
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"Music, Martinis and Misanthropy" CD/pic.LP
BAOV 1995



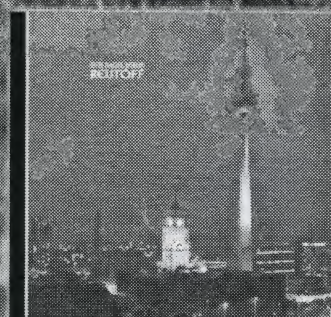
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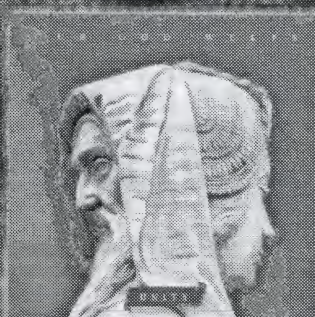
Genocide Organ
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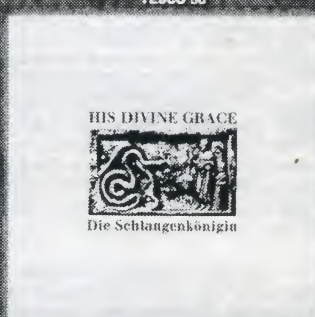
Dernière Volonté
"Les Blessures de l'Amour" CD
HauRuck 49



Reutloff
"Gute Nacht Berlin" CD
HauRuck 47



Our God Weeps
"Unity" CD
HauRuck 43

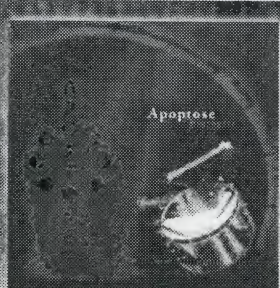


His Divine Grace
"Die Schlangenkönigin" CD
HauRuck 42

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Isomer
"Serpent Age" CD
TESCO 021



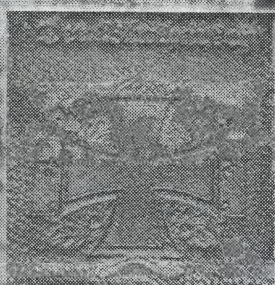
Apoptose
"Biotop" CD
TESCO 452



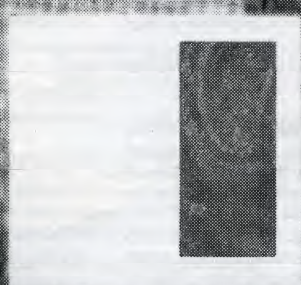
Galerie Schallenschutz
"Harp" CD
TESCO 051



Changes
"Fire Of Life" CD/LP
HauRuck 33



Der Blutharsch
"Fire Danger Season" 4CD
WKN 17



Jack Or Jive
"Towards The Event Horizon" CD
WRR 003



Mushroom's Patience
"The Spirit Of The Mountain" CD/LP 101
HauRuck 33



Cota
"Rhythms and Meditations" CD
Sorcery 02

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On a grey morning, a year after the twin towers had fallen, I was tripping through the States, along Route 66, to be more accurate. And of course I was short on cash – a bum as I am – and my backpack felt too heavy, so I was forced to hitchhike. Suddenly like out of the blue a 70's Pontiac stopped aside and I was picked up. And luckily it was Jerome from Propergol, and our chat began...

First of all, how are you and how has the final stage of the autumn affected you?

- I always have difficulty in burying myself in an interview. Let it be said with all due modesty, I've often got the feeling afterwards having told damned stupidities... I'm never sure of anything at all be it of my music or of my answers... I just try with the only hope that I won't deny them the day after... Maybe it's only a form of hypocrisy, but as I have been told, it's a sign of our times...

I've always been curious of the name Propergol, but I haven't found an answer to it: what does it mean and from where did you take it?

- Dictionary definition of «Propergol» is the mixing of «ergols» (chemical elements composing an explosive and fusing mixture) able to liberate a huge quantity of energy. So it's an explosive used to make rockets taking off. I choose that name for my musical project going from the idea of an incredible energy, but this one always falls into a violent and desperate chaos. Maybe it's an energy coming from despair. I hope that one day I'll be able to straighten out the warped sheet. Recently, I was pleased to discover a track by Jacques Higelin (French committed and smashed up singer) named «Dans mon aéroplane blindé» so literary translated «In my armoured aeroplane». I then thought that its lyrics and structure were to a certain extent close to my project. It was a great moment.

The 'United States...' -album is based on "America" by all the samples, track titles, and of course by the title itself, but do you have a particular feeling for Americans or has it influenced you because of all the things that has happened and still happens over there?

- First part of «United States» was hard to achieve (2 years), I assembled the tracks one by one, piece by piece. Only «Outburst» came at the end of this slow process. The name of the album came spontaneously and also at last. Yes it's an album around American sounding themes. A kind of chewing-gum trend based on some in a way «cult» movies. But first it is more of a mere mockery, an imposing and awe-inspiring spectacle. I just wanted to recreate a state in the already existing state. A phantasmagorical vision of a collapsing, falling into decay world. But I don't restrict the whole thing to USA only. I just use this culture, this state based on violence (see «Heaven's Gate» by Michael Cimino) as an attempt to lead to an impossible redemption. Besides if we extrapolate, what can we think of Israël and of its settlers sponsored by judaic-american lobbies? Isabelle Hupert is being murdered...

You use a lot of samples from movies. Do you use certain samples from movies that you personally like or just as elements that fills the music? Any particular movies you like very much?

- Relation with samples = combination of organs. It's a culture based on an immense reservoir of images, signs, fetishes, objects placed at everybody's disposal, like in a supermarket, a computer storage, a video-store or an interactive TV channel. When I use a sample, I can use it for its meaning or as a sound punctuation. In that case they are only simple elements of interaction. And everything else is nothing less but technology. Be it during five minutes or during a week, sample rehandling is without any doubt something difficult which can be easily criticized, but it is there and it will always exist. Films I watch these days: «La Fin du monde» by Abel Gance, «Cure» by Kiyoshi Kurosawa, «To Live and Die in L.A.» by William Friedkin, «Donnie Darko» by Richard Kelly for its music and its mood. There are some others but drawing up a list would be too long...

I see the noise scene locking itself up by repeating itself a lot, but you have added a really fresh wind to the whole scene with combining massive bass sounds, switching shrieks and violent effects. How do you see the development of your music and how do you set up the constructions and patterns?

- Hum, thank you for compliment. I must say it cheers me up. I'm relatively paranoiac, unsatisfied and always

doubting... I don't know what I'm going to make tomorrow... I only have got a vague and slight idea of that... At the moment the only important thing for me is my label: Hermetique. www.hermetique.net as well as a long and exacting task: a video project named: FoundgoragE that I'm producing with David Eudier, a script writer and producer assistant. I hope it will be possible to collaborate with other artists through samplers, split-albums or side-projects. I'm going to work in the near future with my friend John/SLOGUN. I really like its spontaneity. We both are on the same wavelength. There are also some soundtrack projects for the cinema, but for the moment I can't say much more... All this in respite... having heart troubles and repeating anguish crises that prevent me from sleeping... Take your handkerchiefs... But am I really alone in this case??? I don't think so...

Your music would definitely stand out as massive and prominent material live. How does your music work out live? It must be very powerful live, but how does the music differ from album-versions to the stage performances?

- No lives for the moment. Its planned for the beginning of 2004, if I'm still alive...

Music itself should be the same as far as intensity, but completely different in its structure. I'm going to work during one year at videos and at a «scenography» connected with my former releases.

How would you describe the sound of Propergol to a person who has never heard it before?

- A little girl walking on a dim road. Some crude green grass and a dull sky. You're flown over by a silver aircraft bomber. Tenseness... Action. Somebody is running after the girl. A subjective vision. She gets struck. She's falling. Her skull is being fractured. Dismembered, skinned, branded, soiled. Thousand images a second in accelerated motion. Hands-flash-images. Running, running, running. Cut! Credit titles! End! Let's make it again... A seminal and archaic music. A movie without roll-film. An iron cable one throws away after having twisted it. One has to break records to be able to reinvent them.

What can you tell about the French noise and industrial scene? Are there any particular artists to keep an eye on?

- Minamata, La Nomenclature, Etant donné, PPF, Les joyaux de la princesse, Add N to(X). Speaking about French scene and thinking about it, these projects – new or older – come to my mind because of their serious and of their artistic integrity.

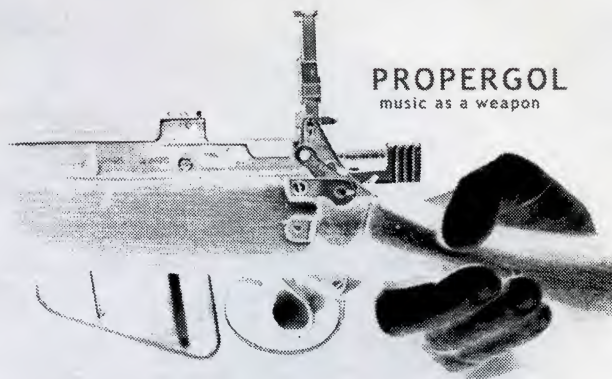
The rest of the French scene I can know stands out for its teenage-attitude only...

Noise is probably the most harsh and extreme musical form. Where do you see the musical development turning into in the future? Can it get even more extreme or will there maybe be different nuances and elements involved?

- Our listening is a selective one. Con-Dom, the Grey Wolves, Control, Strom.ee, Grunt, Exsanguinate, Death Squad, Taint, Slogun, NTT to quote only a few... New or older units, they are, according to me, incarnating the future of this scene. A cornerstone with no concessions in store for the listener. A cope of lead surrounding us, bringing our deepest thoughts coming up to our minds again. Something dangerous for ourselves and for the others. Some molotov-cocktails thrown in the face with only the stop key as comfort...

The present technology facilitates artists to produce more music and even more projects. It's like recycling of the same culture. Do you think the music scene will suffer from stagnation due to the overproduction of some artists?

- I think it is first suffering from mediocrity and from a



PROPERGOL
music as a weapon

lack of integrity among certain artists/labels known or unknown. Some newsletters/magazines/fanzines are also partly responsible for that state of things mistaking their own ego with the role they should play. Those should better die! But there are still some really interesting artists and labels. I think that everyone has the right to create. But it should be like entering into religion, it must then be nothing less than a total self-investiture. One has to give everything possible. To make music, movie-scripts... first means to offer things. An every day selfquestioning act. Some cries, some tears, some tries, something close to the breaking point... To bring what the listener would refuse to do, in order to drive him to the wall. To give him a slight idea of it. A questioning process, but never an answer.

Why do you think that so many people are interested in noise music, in general? Is it just an esthetic form of the underground culture that has gained a lot of interest for the extremer side or do you think there is something deeper into it like; social background, bad upbringing, the society or?

- I think that everybody has her own gloomy side. Little monkey sets out and its «Ground Zero» at every and any time. It remains to know who listens to this music? Switch on radio and and I'll sing you some tunes... Real meaning of this music, is to be able to break off from it as easily as if you would sink into quick-sands up to the throat... Having the ability to name and to create what is unnamable without showing it, as Lovecraft did in «Dexter Ward» for instance. That's why one can't grasp noise music so easily. It can be uneasy and nightmarish as well as it can be clear and obvious. Other values can mix. The positive essential being of this musical style is to deliver always a meaning since it is musically nonsense. A real noise track isn't as easy to create as one could imagine if one tries to give it a kind of story or a deep narrative structure bringing therefore a close connection between artist and listener. A palpable example is Slogun, John Balistreri's project which is totally representative of a violent interaction affecting us deeply in our most intimate excitements. It is thus near to us. It is inside us.

Do you think it's important to channel your own thoughts and beliefs via music – like religion, political statements – or is it more of a reflection of this sick world?

- It's our common fate. Constantly walking on a tightrope, we juggle with our point of views and political inclinations. Everything is a political act, even if I deny the single word of it. But you won't find your answer here. Ask me the question what would I be without musical creation? I answer you: somebody dangerous.

Thanks for your time and if you have still have something on your heart the following lines are yours...

- A book suggestion: «Suerte» by Claude Lucas.

www.hermetique.net



When was Glass Throat Rec. started, by who and why?

My wife Rachel and I started Glass Throat Recordings in the early part of 1997. Glass Throat has been an avenue to control my own artistic destiny, releasing all my solo experimental/noise/dark ambient/soundscape compositions as well as any related endeavors... Splits I might have shared or collaborative works.

Thus far, Glass Throat has also been a stable, yet very small, intimate recording studio... All my releases to date have been engineered and produced here in one way or another...

You now have released only CDs, do you have plans for releasing another formats (vinyl), which can offer a bigger surface for the artwork?

Our first release was actually a limited cassette endeavor not related to my work at all... Other than me engineering the recording. I think eventually we will consider other formats for release. The thing is, we focus a lot of our energy on presentation (packaging and printing)... We do a lot of custom printing work (special paper stocks) to our releases that 90% of pressing/printing plants here in the

states do not offer... Or can not do! As you'll begin to notice, almost all labels who job off the work in one package (printing and pressing together) come back with the same old cheap white stock with a 4 color process. Half the time it looks like shit cause it is not registered properly. We avoid this all together! Most of the places I have looked into would actually cost more for printing gatefolds for 12" than what we would spend on a CD release... If you can imagine! So perhaps one day? My wife who is the graphic design/print layout dept. of G.T.R. works for a major print house that specializes in custom printing. We know of this first hand. Yes, I see what your getting at with bigger surfaces for the art... But it's a lot more expensive to print it with our tastes in mind!!!

You have done a small amount of releases. What are the methods of choosing a new artist? Are they friends or only "professional" relationships? Do you welcome promo tapes from new artists from another countries?

Choosing a new artist? ...Very simple! The work must be truly sincere and very emotional! ...I want to be moved by another artists work. The artist must be true to themselves as an individual, not to mention a strong sense, a vision for their own artistic destiny. Thus far, Herod (our first release), Scott Candey's Gruntsplatter project and soon to be released, Vadim's Chaos as Shelter project... They are all very close to us as friends. However, G.T.R. may soon be working with artists outside of my own endeavors and close cohorts!!! Absolutely, I welcome any sort of correspondence... However, G.T.R. is not in the position to release anything from demos received... Yet!

What are the goals of Glass Throat Rec.?

Well, I want to simply create and release art that I'm more than proud of. I want to push myself as an artist as far as I can... To explore as much as I can within a composition... To never feel confined with any aspect of the release... I want the artists I'm involved with to feel and do the same... Not to worry about others, but to focus on what makes them feel... Become one with themselves through this amazing genre of artistic expression... Experimental/Soundscape!

Do you sell mostly inside USA? Are you distributed in all the world? Where can we find Glass Throat releases? Where do most of your records go to?

Yes, as of now mostly the US and Canada. My European distribution will soon grow with my next release Ruhr Hunter/Chaos as Shelter. I'm still in the process of building a solid foundation of international and domestic distributors. Being that I'm so small and unknown, most do not bother with me. However, I have a ton of small mail order distros. In the States and some in Europe that have kept me going so far. You obviously can find all my releases direct here at G.T.R. Also, I receive a decent amount of mail orders direct... Any distributors please get in touch with questions... I do not trade, consignments may be discussed... With my experience, these methods have done nothing to support my endeavors nor those of the artists... Only have they hurt them!!!

Are you members of any of the Glass Throat bands? If yes, what are your influences (musical/non musical)?

Yes, Ruhr Hunter is my solo project. I did a split release with Gruntsplatter and later collaborated with Scott of said project to form the very dark, industrial, organic ambient project Triage! I have a Ruhr Hunter/Chaos as Shelter collaboration coming out shortly. I'm currently working on my second full length Ruhr Hunter album titled "Torn of This". Wow, hmmm? My influences, there is so much! Certainly the environment around me is most important... Social negativity. The demise of our lands and wild life hold strong with in my work... Dreams and nightmares I may have can often inspire a composition... Other artists I'm inspired by would have to be the Neurosis/Tribes of Neurot clan...

Are the Glass Throat bands doing concerts?

I'm currently involved with a harsh noise, psychedelic ambient, woeful drone collaborative project called Your Cell: Yourself that plays live. I know Scott's Gruntsplatter plays out as well... That's about it. They are all studio based endeavors as of late... Perhaps that will change, we shall see?

Is there any new or older band that has amazed you lately? What is your favourite band/style of music?

Ahhh...Hmmm? Well, any style as long as it's powerful, moving work!!! As I mentioned prior... Neurosis is all I will ever need to survive in this world!!! But... What I've been listening to lately, has really inspired me and I highly recommend these albums I'm about to list for you... Godspeed You Black Emperor "Skinny Fists like Antennas..." ...The Angels of Light "New Mother" ...Steve Reich "Music for 18 Musicians" ...Steve Von Till "As the Crow Flies" ...Just to name a few...

Glass Throat Rec. is quite a new label. How have the responses been so far?

Outstanding to be quite honest! I'm very pleased with the reaction towards my work and the releases in general. I hope it keeps up?

Future plans?

Well, next up for release here is the collaboration I spoke of with my project Ruhr Hunter and Chaos as Shelter. This spring, I will be recording for an amazing collaboration with myself, Vadim's Chaos as Shelter and a 3 piece traditional, dark ambient folk project from Israel called Agnivok. The name for this collective will be called Morenamara. We may see it's release here at G.T.R., yet there has been talk of major outside interest as well. I'm recording now for a second Ruhr Hunter album and that should see the light of day by summers end. There are other goodies in the works, however nothing is confirmed for mentioning.

Chet Scott/RUHR HUNTER...

GLASS THROAT RECORDINGS

4351 Palatine Ave., North Seattle, Wa 98103, U.S.A.

T A B U L A R A S A

Hello, can you introduce yourself to the readers and explain us your motivations to create this sort of label? Is there a public for this sort of music in a mediterranean country like Spain?

We created the label two years ago. It was a consequence of our industrial bar, when we meet some persons that makes music, so we make the label because in Spain, there is none labels for this music. For the moment, the label have only our releases, but we want to expand us.

How many persons are involved in this label?

At the moment, only 4 Javi, Cristina, Tony & Mari Luz.

You have a bar in Madrid, the music programming in this bar is power electronics? What is the reaction of the people in the bar?

It's not only power electronics, we also play death industrial, experimental, ritual, E.B.M... In the beginnings, people look at us, and said: "What's that? What kind of music is it?" But now, people reaction is good, because we educated their ears.

Since Esplendor Geometrico, we haven't got a lot of news about the industrial scene in Spain, are there a lot of bands in your country (power electronics, noise, death industrial, old school, ambient, ritual...), are there any events (concerts), any fanzines?

The Spanish scene is very few. No many bands, no many events, no many... nothing. Sometimes, we can see good concerts like Whitehouse, Merzbow, Coil, NON... But the most part of them, was in Barcelona.

What are your projects for the future of Tabula Rasa?

Our futures plans are released new material on CD-R. We are working in new projects like, Noise Factor, El Hombre Arborescente, EIL, Sindrome de Ota Benga...

Are the bands on your label coming exclusively from Spain? If yes, why?

At the moment, there are only Spanish, because we have no contact with foreigners bands for the moment, but we really like it.

Do you want to produce only power electronics/noise or another sort of underground music assimilated to this movement (ambient, experimental, ritual)?

At the moment, only this kind of music, because we haven't got bands that makes other styles of music.

Concerning the packaging and support, will it be always CDR and home made?

At the moment, yes. We want to make CD in the future.

Where can we find your productions in France?

With Nuit et Bravillard.

Is there an ideology (political, philosophy, religion) behind your label? A concept, an aim?

No, we don't want to know nothing about that. We make this because we like it & enjoy with it.

Thanks, a message to the readers?

They must support the scene and try to expand it, like we do.

V I C T I M S F R O M T A B U L A

Can you introduce your band and explain us your motivation to create this sort of music?

The band was born two years ago. We are Javier & Tony. The style is power electronics-industrial noise, because it's the best style for us.

I think your work sounds like a mix between Lille Roger, Atrax Morgue and something like Taint with some rhythm like Esplendor Geometrico. Do you agree with this description?

Thank you very much for this description, but when we make sounds, we don't think to sound like anybody. It's spontaneous, but the band that really obsession us is Whitehouse.

What are the bands that influenced you?

There is a lot... Whitehouse, S.P.K., Esplendor Geometrico, N.W.W., Coil, Vivenza, Merzbow, Sutcliffe Jugend... and others actuals bands like Atrax Morgue, Deathpile, Macronympha, B.D.N., Slogun...

Can you tell me who are the victims who are listed in your release "The Victims"?

All are Denis Nilsen victims, a mass murder from England.

If you like this sort of concept, I think you probably like the band Slogun? Do you know that he will play live here in Lille in November during Deadly Actions 4? Can I hope to see you there?

Yes, we really like Slogun, we really like to go to Lille, but it depends on many things... maybe, who knows?

Some bands in the power electronics movement are using a sadist/masochist/extremist/morbid imagery, what do you think about it? Is it a sort of fashion in a movement who criticizes a sort of society of consumption? Is it not paradoxal?

We think that this kind of image is the most adequate for this kind of music.

I know you have made an interview with Marco Corbelli and Deathpile. Marco Corbelli says that he is a sick person doing sick music and the men behind Deathpile say that "without censorship, pornography will be marvellous, we can see snuff porn pedophiles movies". What is provocation, what is reality? After this declaration, what do you think of Jonathan Canady?

We respect their opinions, if in this world there are sick people who makes this kind of aberrations... Who is really sick, the person who makes this actions, or the person who saw it?

What are your relations with this sado electronic movement, if you have any?

We haven't got none relation.

What are you planning for the future of VFT?

At the moment, we only want expand our contacts around the world and people enjoy with it.

What are your methods to produce sounds and to find inspiration? What are the feelings behind your songs?

We search and tape sounds experiment with all types of instruments and machines. We manipulated and transformer all in our PC. It's a way to explain our noisy today's world.

Thanks, a message to the readers?

Enjoy the victims!!!! Very soon more...

T A B U L A R A S A / V I C T I M S F R O M T A B U L A

RRRRecords

It has always been so amazing to me how the people involved in the scene in the 70s and 80s have managed to get in touch with it - that I just can't really understand. I was born and have lived over half of my life in a small city with 30,000 inhabitants, located 4 km from the Russian border. No records shops really, no friends listening to anything else but top 40 hits (until finding the UG scene). I liked comics, found some magazine reviewing underground comics from the library, then wrote to them, found some other underground zines and through that naturally underground music. But it was all so accidental. I had a metal background and none of the metal/punk zines ever mentioned anything about noise. I was doing Grunt tapes as late as '93. From "real" industrial, I knew only E. Neubauten. When I mentioned to a friend from Czech Republic that I'd like to do a Grunt 7", but doubt anyone wants to listen to noise from records, he sent me the address of RRR + couple of Jap noise labels and told there are actually labels who release noise on CDs/LPs and countless tapes, and a whole new world opened to me (and started a non-stop search of information, collecting, trading and listening to new and old noise). The only ones who answered at the time were RRR and G.R.O.S.S. G.R.O.S.S. tapes were too expensive for me at the time, so the RRR catalogue was a "treasure map" and was the best source for industrial/noise records for several years. Therefore I'd say RRR is pretty influential for my work with Freak Animal and this interview was an excellent opportunity to find out more about the man behind RRRRecords and Emil Beaulieu. All Emil Beaulieu "minutoli records" are still classic for me. I would advice every noise fanatic to check them out while still possible, for the ridiculously low price of 3 CDs for 20\$!

RRRRecords was started about 20 years ago. Did you start your own experimental music "career" before that and how did it happen? I could imagine the situation to be very different then than in 2003 when there is abundance of information, artists, labels, etc?

- After my discharge from the Air Force in 1981, I found myself on a cross-country hitch-hiking expedition trying to decide what to do next with my life - I noticed that every town I went to, the first thing I would do is hit all the used record stores looking for cool records to buy and then mail back home to my moms house - when I eventually made it to Spokane WA, I met an elderly woman who was in the process of opening up her own used record store - so I volunteered my services to help organize and cart around box-loads of old used records - when I realized how easy it was for this woman to open her own shop, I made the conscious decision to open my own used shop - I really wish I could remember the name of the woman and her shop, but its now a lost memory - after all my money ran out, I returned back home to Manchester NH and found myself a job - every week after paying my bills, whatever money was left over was spent on used records - I would scrounge every thrift store, flea market, yard sale and buy every rock'n'roll record I could find as long as it wasn't scratched and priced \$1.00 or less - after a couple years, I had several thousand records - then by chance I met a gentleman at a flea market who was in the process of closing his record shop in Lowell MA - I bought out the last of his inventory and basically moved right into his shop - at that time, there was 3 of us using the same shop to sell our wares - I sold records, Hal sold comic books and Dick sold baseball cards - after about a year, I was the only one making any money and before long I was the one paying all the bills - so I decided to move out and open my own shop - RRRRecords officially opened its doors on Jan 3, 1984 - all I had was several thousand used R'n'R records and a passion for extreme electronic and experimental musics - so I started writing all the artists and labels I liked and ordered all the stuff I could afford - later that same year I published my 1st mail-order catalog - success was immediate, there really wasn't anyone around in the USA doing it to any great extent at that time - my 1st LP came out 1 year later (Eugene Chadbourne - Country Music Of Southeast Australia)

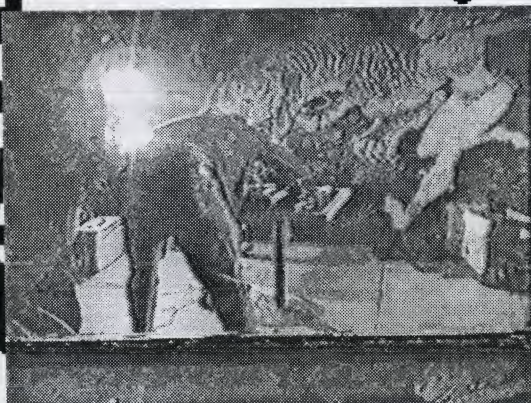
As far as my own Emil Beaulieu/Due Process is concerned, once I moved to Lowell MA, I met a guy named David Vaillancourt - one day when I was at his house he started

playing his guitar and he handed me a microphone - I just put the mic up to his short-wave radio and Due Process was born - we used to record all our jam sessions and would invite all our friends to come join in - one day while Dave was doing something else, I got motivated and made a solo tape - on that day Emil

Beaulieu was born.

How did you develop an interest towards experimental/extreme electronics? I wasn't around in the 80s but even in the early 90s it wasn't so obvious that one could ever come across such style of "music". I'd assume 10 years earlier being even more difficult to find it. When I was doing my first tapes, I wasn't aware that there was actually labels who release noise on CDs.

- I started listening to music when I was 14 or 15 and even back then my tastes were somewhat eclectic - while



all my friends loved stuff like Led Zeppelin and Deep Purple, I was into Bowie and Alice Cooper - that led to stuff like Iggy, and then Eno and then John Cage - it was always a quest to find something more extreme, more bizarre than previous - I really don't remember where I first discovered "noise" except maybe thru John Cage - but my 1st real exposure to noise as a viable scene or genre was when I got turned on to a small mail-order company out of Colorado called Aeon Music - I guess that would be around 1981 or 82 - it was run by a guy named Kent and he had all the tapes from TNB, Ramlah, Mauthausen Orch and all the rest - its when I started buying those tapes that I found my calling - Aeon didn't last very long, when he decided to close up his operation, I bought his remaining inventory.

I was once told by someone who had visited your shop that you had a huge box of tapes you get as promos, to be considered for a release. Do you still get a lot of promos and would you say there is any use for anybody to send them? Do you nowadays hear things that makes you amazed/surprised?

- Oh yeah, I still get lots of demos and promos - not quite as many as I used to, but they still roll in - its been a while since a demo has bowled me over - at this point, I'm not interested in receiving demos for possible release on RRR, lately its been invitation only, I'm only asking my personal friends to give me something for release.

During the years you have released an amazing amount of records. For example the Pure discs didn't have catalogue numbers and there are plenty of tapes which don't have them either. Together with the sub-labels, how many releases have you done?

- I'm really not sure, I kinda lost track - but its over 450 releases at this point - I used to have a ledger where I wrote down every single release but I lost interest in keeping track some years ago - as you mentioned, a lot of times I don't bother with catalog numbers and I also like to re-use the same catalog numbers over and over - I like the idea of intentionally screwing with the collectors and archivists who have to know every detail.

Many of RRR titles include xeroxed artworks/covers and rough lay-outs. Even though there are "high quality" full color covers, multi panel gatefold etc, to me those xerox covers appeal the most. What do you think about many noise labels these days doing very neat and glamorous sleeves, making their products look like clean mainstream releases?

- Yeah, I personally love the hand-made look for records and CDs - its truly a labor of love when someone takes the time to hand assemble each and every single copy - usually when I press something in an edition of 300 or

less, its hand assembled - if I press 500 or more, its manufactured - it basically comes down to time and energy and how much \$\$ I have to spend on that particular project - I try not to pass judgement on other peoples releases, but generally I'm not impressed with the look and design of a lot of the noise/experimental LPs and CDs that come thru my shop.

In past you made several anti-records. What is your fascination with records that can't be listened?

- Actually, they can be played if you have the imagination and equipment - years ago I released a cassette called Emil Beaulieu - Anti-Performance which consisted of me performing individual copies of the anti-records I released - I love that tape, genuine anti-noise - some of those tracks ended up on my "Memories" CD.

Not so many labels keep tapes in stock. You still keep putting them out. What keeps you attracted to the tape medium?

- Before they invented CDs and the internet, there was cassette culture where people all around the world would constantly trade tapes back and forth - I was very active in that scene, I went out of my way to contact anyone and everyone remotely connected with noise music and get all their tapes, especially during the 80s and 90s - I'm willing to bet I have the largest collection of noise cassettes in the USA - I doubt I have the largest collection in the world because there might be some guy in Japan or Germany with more than me - when I'm old and near-death, I hope to donate my collection to The Library Of Congress - I still love cassettes, they are my roots, its where my heart lies.

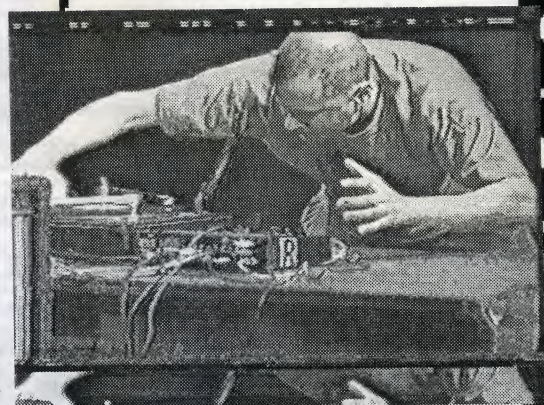
I still don't own a CD burner, but now I'm starting to collect CD's - I love them for the same reason I love cassettes - its a labor of love direct from the artists heart and hands - I don't collect manufactured CDs at all, zero, zip, zilch, nada - I don't have any in my personal collection, except my own RRR.

But you do collect LPs? I was once told that you own pretty much everything from early power electronics/industrial/noise vinyls. I remember that the RRR catalog used to have a small ad that you buy all old electronic/noise records, being just a couple or an entire collection. Do you feel you have it "all" now or are there some specific titles you're still looking for?

- Oh yeah, I have a very extensive record collection, but I've kinda grown immune to collecting - I basically own all the records I want to own and since going on-line, I've learned that every record ever made in the history of the world will eventually find its way to Ebay or someones sale list - for instance, I've never owned a copy of Experiments with Ice LP - its a rare early title from United Dairies - in the past year, I've seen 2 copies on-line, but I didn't bother buying one - I really don't need it in my life, its just another record.

What do you think of the prices people are paying in auctions today? You are not tempted to make money with some jewels of the collection? One member of the old tape scene said it is insane to ask/pay 30\$ for a tape (their value being something not counted in cash), but we have seen the same pretty intense prices going up to even hundreds of \$\$.

- Of course I think about selling off some of my



super-rarities and some day I probably will - in 1994, to celebrate my 10th anniversary, I had a huge auction from my personal collection - I made some very serious money back then and I could very easily pay my mortgage if I did something like that now - In the past year I've sold some rare noise records on Ebay so I can raise some funds to kick-start my label again - but my past few auctions were

all things like country music records or rock star bullshit - I have a shop full of stuff no one in Lowell wants and Ebay has become a nice dumping ground for me - some of the auction prices are rather ridiculous of course, but what's no big deal to you or I is real important to the guy buying it.

RRR has made some very special vinyls, that nobody else has done. Like a 100 lock groove 7" and a 500 lock groove LP. You must have good connections to a pressing factory to make such items? How has the response been for doing such records?

- Those 2 are actually my all-time best selling releases - the lock-groove 7" went thru 7 pressings - when I called the pressing plant to order the 8th pressing, they told me they couldn't find the plates - they actually lost them somewhere in their warehouse - that record was cut/mastered by Aardvark Mastering in Denver Colorado - I called Aardvark hoping they still had plates laying around their place but they didn't - it was while I was commiserating with Paul Brekus (Mr Aardvark) about the lost plates that he told me he could fit 250 lock-grooves on one side of an LP - and with those words I decided to produce RRR-500 - I fully intend to keep that LP in print forever.

During the years you have been in contact with many artists/bands which may have now quit their artistic creation. Is there anyone you'd like to see "back in business" or may they all rest in peace?

- Eric Lunde - that guy was the best.

Not so long ago, RRR did a website and you started using e-mail and internet. Before that, it felt like RRR was on some kind of a hiatus. You mentioned that very little releases was done as well. What happened?

- 1999 was my 15th anniversary and I decided to celebrate by taking the whole year off - 1 year became 2 years, became 3 years - during that time I published no catalogs and released no titles - however I went thru all sorts of life-changes - I played a lot of shows, got married, grew a pot-belly, played a lot of shows, got divorced, lost the lease to my shop and had to relocate, played lots of shows - last year I bought my 1st computer - now I no longer publish catalogs, I just do website and internet stuff - I still play lots of shows - and I've decided to resurrect my label, I have a bunch of new releases available.

I know many people who are little tired to be prepared all the time to send cash so they don't miss a new release if they are 2 months late... Often these days labels release limited items which are sold out immediately and become "rarities" within months. But the good thing in RRR is that especially Pure, but also some RRR stuff like most of the tapes, have been available for many years. Many of them 10 years or more! Is this intentional to keep stuff available (with bigger editions?) or would it be welcome to suddenly sell out all of the Pure discs from the catalog?

- Well, its easy to keep tapes in print, I just keep dubbing them off as people request them - most of the LPs/CDs that have been in my catalog for 10 years or so is because I pressed a lot and I still have many copies to sell - but I sometimes reissue titles if its a "hot" seller - yeah, I think it would be great if I could suddenly sell off all my back catalog but the chances of that happening are pretty slim.

After working with dozens and dozens of well known names and "leading" artists of the many different experimental/noise genres, Anezephalia, Consumer Electronics, Asmus Tiechens, Merzbow and almost every older Jap noiser, John Duncan, Haters, etc etc. now you mentioned a plan about starting to put out only local bands. Is it a final decision or do you keep the future open? Do you feel it's essential to put out small and lesser known artists while the more established can find labels anywhere?

- As a label its always been more important to me to issue the 1st LP from an unknown artist than the 7th LP from someone well-known - a number of currently well-known artists had their 1st release on RRR - NOW is the golden age of noise, there are more labels and more artists involved than ever before - since resurrecting RRR, I've decided the best thing for me is to concentrate my efforts on my friends - the people I actually hang out with and do shows with - I have lost all interest in releasing national or international artists because there are so many labels willing to issue their work - RRR will now become a local or regional label, I will only release LPs and CDs from people who live in the New England states of the USA, but of course thats not exactly written in stone - I might put out something non-New England if its truly special - however I will keep my Recycled Music cassette series open to the world at large.

If I recall correctly, some of J. Duncan's records were pending some time before releasing when the

cover artwork included something that could be considered child porn? How much do you have interests towards shock tactics or perversions/extreme views that artists include in their noise?

- I personally have no interest in that stuff - for some reason the early noise artists latched onto that imagery and it became the norm for this scene - I think its just tough-guy poseur shit, kinda like Rap and their gangstas and the Heavy Metal kids and the devil - of course this imagery is completely over-used and has simply become boring and trite - a number of the old-school artists have stuck with it and that's all fine and dandy for them - however when I see a new, young artist doing it, my 1st instinct is that they are amateurs without a shred of imagination - its just the same old crap all over again - "Look at me, I'm evil" - yeah right, look at you, you're an idiot.

I'm not sure what you are talking about concerning John Duncan, but some of his stuff is rather perverted.

I think some of the Pure CD inserts and issues of Bananafish included "hate mail" people have sent you. One of the recent things would be Bastard Noise's "RRRevenge" 2xCD. And what about the Violent Onsen Geisha song "Fuck off RRRecords, Bye Bye Noise Music"? What is the story behind it and do you get a lot of pleasure from attempts to insult you?

- Insults are a form of stupidity and stupidity makes me laugh - VOG is one funny guy and his thing was a classic, 1st time I saw it I busted out laughing - he never explained why and I didn't bother asking, I understood perfectly - a joke just isn't funny if you have to explain the punchline. That RRRevenge thing was just Bastard Noise's way of dealing with RRRejection - I asked them to submit a demo for my Pure series - they sent me a demo with 8 songs, 4 of them were excellent, 4 of them were secondary - so I told them I want to release the 4 songs that I liked and please send me more material so I can fill up the CD with only excellent material - several months later they sent me a 2nd demo - inside I found a letter saying they found a label to release the 1st demo in its entirety and would I please release this new demo in its entirety - unfortunately the 2nd demo was terrible, there wasn't one good song on the whole thing - so of course I had to reject it - no big deal, just another in the endless series of rejected demos - I asked them to try again but I never heard back and promptly forgot all about it - a few years later Bastard Noise releases a 2xCD called "RRRevenge" - I busted out laughing when I heard about it - I think if they issued both demos in their entirety and reprinted my 2 rejection letters verbatim, it would have made a brilliant document - instead they took just a few songs off the 2nd demo and spread them out over 2CDs and filled it up with newer and better material - but the best part was their liner notes declaring me a big meanie for not liking their songs - I think this is the coolest thing that could ever possibly happen - some band whose members I don't know and have never met devoted an entire 2CD set to me and all I had to do was tell them I didn't like their songs - of course the 1st thing I did when it came out was buy 25 copies which I repackaged in boxes of tissues - all were signed and numbered by me and came with the inscription "RRR-Making Grown Men Cry" - but dont ask, they're completely sold-out.



That Pure insert you mention was a reprint of a letter some guy wrote me telling me how much he hated the Ramleh CDs on Pure - another big laugh.

Bananafish is a humour magazine with a passing interest in noise culture - they appreciate a good laugh - those "hate mail" letters were crybaby bullshit from ex-girlfriends and temperamental artist-types - boo hoo, somebody call a wahmbulance.



You have stopped paper catalogues and switched to the internet. What do you think of other internet related things, for example the mp3 format for music?

- I've owned a computer for about 1 year now and I've really grown to love it - however, I still get easily confused and I keep asking my friends how to do this and that - I'm still trying to master the art of email - MP3's don't interest me at all, I never listen to them and I never make them - at least not yet.

How long has RRR also been a record shop? Do you sell a lot of noise for those who visit the shop or is sales based more on mailorder? I think you also carry "normal" records?

- Yeah, I gave you the RRR story above and yeah, my shop has tons of used records, tapes and CDs of all musical styles - the vast majority of my in-store business is regular normal music but the local noise aficionados visit me regularly - the vast majority of all noise sales is mail-order.

You have arranged live events in RRR for long time. When did you start and what kind of events are they usually?

- I used to have shows every Saturday at 2:00 in the afternoon - but before long I ran out of interesting local artists and a lot of the people who started playing here really sucked and I couldn't fucken take it anymore - when I moved to my new shop, I stopped the weekly series completely and now only have shows when someone special is coming thru town or if I just feel like inviting a few friends over and having fun - my in-store performances are always very informal, they are just excuses to hang out and BS.

Are you still doing RRRadio? For Finnish people such a thing sounds strange, as here is no such radio culture like in the U.S. or some parts of Europe. Our small country is dominated with a handful of radiochannels, each spewing out the same top 40 hit charts.

- No, I stopped doing RRRadio about 10 or 12 years ago - I basically got bored by the whole thing - there are tons of people doing live collages on the radio nowadays, the whole DJ culture thing has made it common - but its mostly on college stations.

What do you think of typical DJ culture? Do you see much common with your work with turntables?

- I really don't pay attention to DJ culture, it doesn't interest me and DJ culture has no interest in me - my biggest exposure to that stuff is on the TV - I sometimes play shows that have DJs doing their thing, but mostly it just bores the hell out of me - a great big yawn.

What was the birth of Emil Beaulieu like and why was this name chosen? Have you always used the strange record player for the creation of noise or did you use other methods in the beginning? Who built it? Do you update or improve your gear or does it remain similar year after year?

- I grew up in Manchester NH and one of the mayors was named Emile Beaulieu - when I started to make my own solo recordings, I knew I didn't want to release it under my real name - and for some reason, I don't know why, the name Emile Beaulieu popped into my mind - I changed the spelling (and pronunciation) to Emil Beaulieu and have used it ever since - I like the sound of the name, it rolls off the tongue nicely - back in the early days, I used to actively promote Emil Beaulieu as the former mayor of Manchester NH but everyone eventually figured out it was just me being a goof.

My friend Mike Minutoli built the 4-tonearm turntable in 1994 - I had a bunch of tonearms laying around my house and I asked him to build it for me, he's good with wiring and all that stuff - he did a fabulous job and I named the device after him, The Minutoli - when he gave it to me, I was so inspired that I recorded 4 full-length CDs in about 2 weeks - it became the centerpiece of all my recordings and performances ever since - however in the summer of 2002, I decided to give it a rest and I haven't used it since

my current performances revolve around 1 turntable, 1 mini-disc player and some contact-mics - I also for the first time started using pedals - for the past 20 years I've been really adamant about not using pedals or delays or any fancy electronic-gear at all - that stuff always struck me as a cop-out - go buy some gear, push a couple buttons, instant noise music - I've always concentrated on damaging existing consumer electronics (turntables, tape decks, etc) as well as damaging the records and tapes themselves - I decided to start using pedals in an effort to challenge myself and change my sound.

Since '94 I have been wondering what is the main sound presented in track 7 on the "Memories" CD. Could you enlighten me a bit? When using other bands' records in the creation of noise, how important is the record you use or could it be anything?

- Back when I was doing RRRRadio, Rudolv Eb.er sent me a tape of raw material to transform however I wanted - there was a 10 or 15 second section that I really liked so I took that fragment and cut-it up and recombined it over and over again till I had a 3 minute piece that I really liked a lot - it was made entirely by pause-button editing using 2 tape decks - it became a crucial element in my live performances for a year or 2.

Of course I'm very selective about the records I use - its gotta be something I like if I'm gonna transform it into Emil Beaulieu.

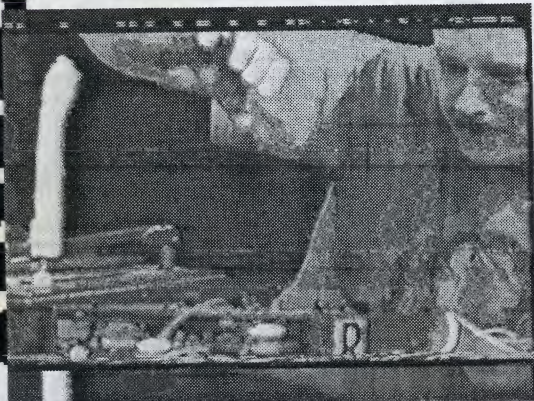
America's Greatest Living Noise Artists -video cover says: "Having been an active member of the international noise underground since 1984, I've seen them all and I've played with them all - as far as I'm concerned, I have no competition - I really am America's greatest living noise artist.....I challenge anyone who thinks they are better than me to meet me on stage and try and take my title away - I'll walk away victorious everytime". Is there anyone you could credit for getting 2nd? Has anyone challenged you lately? Who would be America's greatest dead noise artist?

- The only person to officially challenge me was Chris Goudreau (Sickness) - he and I had a duel in my shop - on that day, he won - he had a great set, I had a crappy set - however we have played many shows together since then and I have reclaimed my crown, thank you very much.

The thing about my claim as AGLNA is that its all a joke of course - when I first put together that video, I was really proud of it and I wanted something heroic for the title - everybody knows Elvis Presley is the King of Rock n' Roll and that Michael Jackson is the King of Pop - unfortunately, Hijo Kaidan declared themselves the Kings of Noise years ago, so I had to settle with being AGLNA - but the cool thing about it was that everybody just

accepted it - no one complained or argued the point, they just said "Yeah, I agree" - and I became AGLNA because I said so.

I recently did a show with Randy Yau and on that day he became AGLNA - his performance was brilliant in its simplicity, full of passion and insight - I'm really jealous, I wish I could be



as good as Randy Yau.

I guess America's Greatest Dead Noise Artist would be John Cage.

On the video can be seen many different styles of Emil Beaulieu. Sometimes totally hilarious with strange performance, sometimes just standing there in a black suit, sometimes nearly like a SWAT team member jumping around the audience, sometimes just casually doing noise with very little attention to actually visually performing anything. Can you say what would be the best live performance you've done so far?

- All shows are different, it depends on many factors - every song has its own identity, and I try to find its essence in performance - aside from the actual songs themselves, the 2 most important things are the PA system and the audience - my very best performances involved big, loud and clean sound systems before a rowdy audience - as a performance artist, I am very confident and self-assured, and for me its all about passion and joy - when the PA has so much balls that I can actually feel the noise physically and it sounds crisp and clean with no unnecessary distortion, then I can dig deep down inside myself and find the passion and freedom that is noise - and its such a joy to look out at a crowd of smiling, grinning faces, people who actually understand and appreciate it - its a very zen thing, I guess - there are certain performances that stand out in my memory as being truly exceptional, but I'll leave it to the audience to decide which is the best.

How much do you enjoy watching other people perform? Do you travel to visit live shows where you are not playing?

- I very rarely actually listen to noise recordings anymore - noise has ceased being a listening experience and has now become a living experience - performance has become the most important factor to me - its the true test of an artists skill - I love playing shows and for these past few years it seems I get to play almost once a week - I've developed a strong reputation as a performance artist and as a result I get lots of invitations to play - which means I get to see virtually every noise or experimental artist that comes thru the Boston area - I never travel just to see a show, if I'm not playing, I'm not there - the only times I do go to shows where I don't perform is to support my personal friends - besides, I don't own a car.

While Emil Beaulieu is self proclaimed American's greatest noise artist, would you say RRR is American's greatest noise label?

- That's pushing it.

Dumpster Diving

Pink Noise Collective-media and propaganda gathered for the first PNC-international, to talk things over (such as our experiences on the topic). This is an assembly of all those experiences. **Degenerate** will be our victim this time. We like to be autonomous and anonymous. Provided by: **Barrikad**.

Tactics:

The first thing is to find out who in your town is wasteful. I have found that newly opened businesses in yuppie parts are often unaware of the wonderful things they throw away. They make good targets; but you have to be careful not to piss them off. A disenchanted yuppie is twice as likely to padlock a dumpster as a shop owner from a more working class background. Many yuppie shopping centers will be ripe for the "doubled" but have security guards patrol the area. You might want to disguise yourself with an apron or a name tag. When questioned, look extremely annoyed (in true yuppie fashion) and say "I'm taking out the garbage, you moron" or something like that.

If you live in a college town, it should be obvious. College kids throw out more useful garbage than perhaps any other class of people on Earth, especially at the end of a semester. Near the end of spring, the campus here in Gothenburg is swarming with scavengers of all kinds. A fellowship exists among us, but there are no rules, no traditions in this game of find-to-keep; some secrets are shared, others kept to the grave.

Successful dumpster diving is not only a question of where, but also *when*. It involves precision timing, especially when it comes to frozen goods and other perishable items. There was a storm here not too long ago that cut the power for some hours in the shopping districts. Many of the businesses were throwing out their frozen goods because their freezers were failing. This constituted an opportune moment, prime for the savvy dumpster diver to collect many otherwise unavailable items. "Max" and I, for instance, were able to dumpster 14 frozen pizzas, 5 apple pies, 12 packages of Magnum ice cream and 8 packages of Nutana burgers; it took us two hours with three dumpsters on foot. We hoarded it all and fed ourselves from the cache for roughly two weeks.

Psychological Effects:

Among other things, dumpster diving is a powerful anti-depressant. In the middle of a desperate night, I left for home on foot to clear my head. I was listening to S.P.K.'s "Leichenschrei record" in my Walkman when I ran in to my friend "Oliver". On a whim I said "Hey! Wanna go dumpsterdiving?" He had never been, but was ready to go. We left the world of despair behind and walked to Nordstan where I took him on my usual rounds.

In the end we walked away with, 3 bags of cookies and a bicycle.

While behind a florist dumpster, looking for something nice for the apartment, a Falck security van shows up...

"I'm gonna have to ask you to leave" he said dryly. Completely swept up by the idea of beautiful dumpstered flowers (tulips), I sauntered up to the enemy and, saying nothing, offered him some flowers. He refused: "I'm allergic to flowers". His eyes never met mine and his hands never let go of the steering wheel. We gathered our flowers, backpacks and left the scene; it was obvious to us all what was going on. On the other hand, dumpster diving can be risky for the recovering bourgeois. Once I was climbing out of the dumpster behind a bread shop, drooling and giggling, and just as I was leaping out, two of the bread shop attendants came out at the backdoor. They looked at me I looked at them, then we both looked at the huge bag of bread I was toting like Santa Claus: "I...uhh..." started to explain but the two of them went back inside before I managed a Ph.D on free food. They looked a little appalled, I felt a little weird. I remember this because one of them must've been an old classmate from elementary school. I shrugged it off and set about my way. Before I could make a clean break, however, the two emerged once again, this time with a loaf of fresh potato bread to give me. "Um, thanks" I said. I don't think he recognized me.

Sustainability:

I try not to be noticed, but war is war. In my experience, it always serves the dumpster diver best to be unseen. I usually make my rounds after store hours and try to clean up the dumpster a bit, leave it in better condition than I found it. However, if the store owner becomes openly hostile, I say - fight back. If they padlock the dumpster, squeeze a tube of super glue into the key hole and leave a lengthy manifesto with a death threat!

Superstition:

First and foremost: never be afraid to get inside the dumpster. The dumpster-gods do not like window shoppers.

Second: if a dumpster appears fruitless, do not assume it will always be so. The dumpster-gods smile upon those who persist. I had to go to the Electrolux dumpster once a week for months before I found anything useful, but once I did - 50 thrown away cd-r's! (the boxes they were held in had got water on them for some reason and therefore they couldn't be sold).

Third: if you find anything useful, take it! The dumpster-gods deserve respect, keep them appeased and all will go well. Last week I found an umbrella and I can assure you it's a damn good thing to have in this town!

Warnings:

Some of us had a problem with this, that's why I bring it up: you've got to watch out for scabies. Don't bring in mattresses that have been thrown away, we know they seem deviously comfortable, but, they're full of little bugs that get inside your skin and try to eat you.

You don't want that, so be careful.

Another thing to watch out for is rat poison. Most common in larger cities, shop owners often pour poison or other lethal substance onto their edible goodies out back to deter the presence of fellow dumpster divers - rats. Sometimes you can smell it and sometimes there will be discoloration on the packing. Be sure to inspect your score and stay away from sketchy ones.

"Dumpster juice" is a bad thing. Sometimes you just don't need to go any deeper.

Scavenging:

Trash picking is a fine art. It takes experience and intelligence to cultivate your skill. Something changes in the mind of a scavenger as she becomes expert, something strange and hard to define. Where others see junk, she sees valuable materials. There is a moment in the life of a serious dumpster diver when she realizes that her hands and feet have super powers and are capable of incredible things, if they are in the right place at the right time, with the right idea. It is mastery of the resources at hand that she can see the unseen, to the extent that she can match her wild imagination with the sea of trash before her. It's the extent to which the dumpster diver can realize the true possibilities hidden from rest of society, hidden in the trash.

Some items obtained:

- rivers of coffee
- mountains of bread
- one custom guitar amplifier
- cassette tapes, CD-R's
- miles upon miles of romantic Christmas lights
- dozen of vinyl players
- old vinyl's like Depeche Mode, Velvet Underground, jazz and blues, country - you name it! (no, no noise/P/E found yet, but are we searching.)
- furniture in various conditions.(look at student homes at the end of each semester.)
- books, I tell you...we could open our own book shop!

The list goes on and on, friends. Now, what are you going to do? Another night with corporate television? We looked at our dumpster-map, joined our crowbars with a "ding" and a smile as the night had just begun.

Contact:

www.pnc-media.tk
barrikad@hotmail.com

Can you introduce yourself to the readers?

- This is Mitchell Altum, responding to these questions from the United States. Eight years ago I began the musical project "Law", which has gained attention in the experimental audio fields through a series of LP and CD releases. I'm also a partner in the growing audio label "Triumvirate", where I primarily handle the graphics and audio duties, as well as promotion and "networking".

Before, Law consisted of two persons, but now, you are alone. Is it very different for you to work alone? Which situation do you prefer?

- Yes, being the sole person behind the music is markedly different than collaborating. I have the only and final say on all creative questions, and can direct the work in whatever direction I want without the need for compromise or agreement. However, on the other side of the situation, it's up to me to create everything that goes into the music, without assistance from a partner who might provide inspiration or balance in the sound, or come up with a sonic idea that might never have occurred to me. I must also cover all the expenses associated with making this type of music myself; equipment costs and repair, advertising and promotional expenses, blank recording media, etc. All considered, I prefer working individually because of the total control I have over all aspects of the project, without the need to work with or around anyone else's schedule or frame of mind.

What are your motivations to create this sort of music? Or to create your label, Triumvirate? What is the significance of this name? Were you not satisfied with the work of the other labels?

- For whatever reasons, I've never been strongly motivated to learn playing a convention instrument, which generally leads to using the types of electronic equipment I possess. One of the aspects of experimental, unconventional music that appeals to me is its unpredictability and freshness. Even with some of the unconventional music I've had for years, and listened to many times, often I'm still not exactly sure while

a great extent to simply be something that's automatically done by and expected from musical performers and groups, too often with no real justification for the activity to even be attempted. It's difficult for the broad genre of "dark ambient/experimental electronics/soundscape manipulation" to be executed in a live setting in any interesting, thought provoking manner; too often you just end up with some guy hunched over a table covered with scattered pieces of electronic gear, blasting mediocre walls of harsh sound too loudly, while the expected video of "shock", gore, or politically incorrect images is played on a wrinkled sheet tacked up at the back of the stage behind them. I don't have the inspiration or the money to produce something exceptionally better than this for a live show of my own music, so there's no real reason for me to do it. As for wishing to remain anonymous to the participants in a concert (artists and audience), related to the NeB festival, I mentioned that I'd really be more interested in seeing the French countryside and historical sites than most of the performances offered at the show. Because I've been involved in these types of music since 1993, LAW, and myself personally, have become somewhat known in these fields. However, since I feel no need to plaster my personal visage across the packaging of my musical releases, or in the pages of print interviews, virtually no one I'm in contact with, or who listens to my music knows what I actually look like. It's not some juvenile game of secrecy, it's more that I see little need for most artists to display themselves in relation to their

clicked fire arms and death imagery in the dark ambient/industrial/power electronics genres by artists who for the most part don't own a fire arm, have never fired one, and have never gotten a close look at what a bullet can do to the human body. I've been using firearms for over a decade, and happened to be target shooting with a variety of weapons just this afternoon before working on this interview, however, I rarely feel the urge to use such imagery in any of the artwork associated with Law or Triumvirate. When looking at that CD cover I think back to that photo session several years ago - to handling the pistol, caked with dried blood, after retrieving it from the police dept. I think of how the room where my sibling shot himself in the temple with that .357 magnum looked afterwards. I think of stupid cunts and clueless industrial kids posing for CD covers and magazine photos while waving around a fire arm they can't field strip, unjam, or hit a target at 100 yards with...

In these days, world culture is dominated by Anglo-Saxon/American artistic values, especially in music with the constant growth of Anglo-Saxon/American pop music, the only music offered to us by the mainstream media. Is it possible, in the USA, to have an audience for underground bands like Law? Is there a well developed scene? Is there solidarity or solitude?

- Yes, there is a limited audience for these types of music, but I believe it is much more dispersed and fractured in the US than it is in Europe. This is due in part to the expansiveness of America, and the extended distances between the largest metropolitan areas, where any type of "scene" might tend to be more concentrated. Although, with the rapid growth of the internet during the 90s, it's no longer as difficult for fans of the music in rural or isolated regions of the country to communicate with each other and have access to the "underground" music that is usually only stocked by music stores in the larger cities. In recent years loose knit pockets of experimental artists have formed more noticeably in areas outside the US's major cities. Although the various



LAW



taking the work in exactly what will come next in a song or on a CD, due to the piece's lack of adherence to traditional/conventional song structure and instrumentation. The music I make personally tends to be of a "dark", abrasive, or challenging nature because those characteristics are all elements of my personality. I have no interest in projecting a false or idealized image of myself through my creative expressions. When I agreed to join my two partners in this audio label endeavor, naturally we soon needed some name for the entity. I drew up a list of interesting, evocative terms, and "Triumvirate" came to mind due to its somewhat classical, atavistic sound, and since there are three of us operating the label. My past experiences releasing my music through outside audio labels have been very mixed, running the spectrum of very satisfying, producing superior results (ANT-ZEN), to the opposite end of the continuum - unprofessional, inconsiderate, and unacceptable (World Serpent Dist.). I naturally have my own views on how a music label should operate, and how they should interact with the artists they work with, and when my partners rather unexpectedly asked me to help them form a label I seized the opportunity to put some of these beliefs and convictions into action. When I release a collection of my own music through Triumvirate, I'm in near-total control of all aspects of the project, from the time the sampler is turned on, through filling orders for the finished CD. Any endeavor I value and take seriously should be executed to the best of my abilities, with determination and skill, and this extends to the work I do for other musicians in helping realize their creations.

Someone said to me that you don't want to play live and when attending a concert or a gathering of other musicians creating similar audio in the "scene", don't want to be introduced to other persons in a concert hall as "Mitchell Altum from LAW". Why?

- I think this stems from a casual e-mail conversation we had, shortly after being invited to perform at a big festival. I explained that while I appreciated the offer, I've never had any serious inclination to recreate my music in front of a roomful of people. Performing live seems to

work - too many think they must use the tactics of the pop/rock world for cheap promotion and self-aggrandizement. It might be amusing and interesting to attend such a concert, and simply observe the happenings and the people I've been communicating with all these years from a detached and anonymous perspective. Beyond that, there's usually little of meaning that can be exchanged in the loud, confused environment of a live show in a smoky, overheated basement somewhere.

For some months now you've had a website for Triumvirate, with very personal aesthetics (I found it very close to the LAW spirit). What do you expect from this media?

- The website is primarily used as a means for gaining more attention for the label, and as a platform for Triumvirate's growing distribution service. Programming and maintaining the site provides me with another outlet for creative impulses, and affords me the opportunity to learn the basics of web programming.

On the cover of "Our Life Through Your Death", there is a photo of the gun your young brother used to commit suicide. What do you want to provoke with this image and what are your feelings when you are looking at it?

- The primary reason for using that photo is because of its striking visual nature. To some extent, my use of that image is my own personal comment on the overuse of

artists are now scattered across the country, Law, Belt, Yen Pox, Blood Box, and VoS all began exploring music within a 10 mile radius of each other. There also seems to be a somewhat broader collection of likeminded artists on America's west coast, located mostly in California. Although the label Crionic Mind and performer Gruntsplatter are based in the overgrown city of San Francisco, Troniks, Lefthandeddecision, Control, Glass Throat Recordings, Ruhr Hunter, and others are spread out through California and the Northwest.

As your sound is original, sincere and personal, I (and some other persons) think that Law will become a reference in this musical genre. Are you satisfied with the feedback you've received, concerning your releases?

- A few years ago I began noticing other experimental audio acts being compared to Law in various reviews, interviews, and music catalogs, as a means of giving the reader an idea of what the other artist sounds like. If nothing else, this implies that enough people are familiar with my work and its general characteristics to use it as a descriptive touchstone. The majority of reviews and assessments the material gets are favorable to strongly positive, with very few totally negative criticisms. I give the most credence to opinions on Law offered by individuals who create music I find valuable and skillfully executed. The rest I'm vaguely curious about, and will read or listen to if I have time, but don't dwell on to any great extent. That goes for BOTH good and bad reviews.

What is the program for the future of Law?

- The future of Law reaches its terminal point in the not too distant future. During the first half of 2001 the French label Nuit et Brouillard should be releasing the final full length collection of new Law material, titled "The Black Lodge". Sometime in 2001 Old Europa Cafe is planning to re-issue the "Wading Knee-Deep in Your Blood" LP from 1999 as a CD, and I'm currently working on revising the graphics and audio for that. All new sounds I produce beyond that conclusion will be under a different title. M.Altum

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If you are to excavate down through the layers of underground music within Australia, you will discover artists and projects toiling away in relative obscurity, particularly with reference to those who are involved with dark ambient type genres. As was the case with Australian dark ambient project Isomer (interview featured in this issue), who have recently issued their debut CD on cult German label Tesco Organisation, similarly sole member Greg Good of Terra Sancta looked abroad for label interest, subsequently being snapped up by premier American label Malignant Records to issue their debut full length. Read on to discover more about another great Australian export within the dark ambient genre.

Terra Sancta have been around for a relatively short amount of time (since 2000 I believe) and will only be known by a small number of people at the moment, however can you please introduce yourself, likewise giving some background information as to how you came to form the dark ambient project Terra Sancta?

- I bought my first synth in 1996. At the time I listened mainly to metal, but also to ambient music. Often when listening to metal intros/outros etc I used to think that it would be cool if there was music that was all like this, something that incorporated these two extremes in music styles. I guess I had a vague Godflesh meets Brian

widely available was it made?

- I made 20 copies which got sent to a few labels, magazines and friends. I really had no idea what the response would be like but it was overwhelmingly positive. Two labels showed interest in releasing it but as it has turned out it became a self release.

Jumping forward 2 years from the release of the mini cdr/demo "Anno Domini", you have now re-recorded these tracks, had them professionally mastered and released the recording yourself as an official MCD. How has the response been to the new and improved version?

- One thing I wasn't happy about with the demo version was the overall sound quality. So after I finished the recording of my second CD I felt that my techniques had improved enough that I should redo the demo. I reworked the tracks and got it mastered by Phil Easter, so it sounds great now.

I got 500 copies printed up and am in the process of trying to get rid of them. Interest is slowly catching on and I have some good distribution now, but it takes a while to get noticed without any sort of label promotion etc.

After having had the pleasure of hearing an advance copy of your debut full length "Aeon", a definite progression of the sound can be detected. Whilst your MCD has a relative level of musical structure due to the use of sampled instruments/choir vocal etc, your debut CD differs in that it is slightly more minimalist musically and takes a deeper and more sweeping dark ambient sound. How do you personally view the differences between the recordings and why did you choose to take this stylistic shift in musical approach?

- I am very satisfied with the way "Aeon" turned out, as

Unlike the power electronics or neo-folk scenes that can be said to contain a political aspect (implied or otherwise), dark ambient music alternately tends to inhabit a bleak spiritual sphere without the political angle. Are there any concepts you utilise as inspiration for the music of Terra Sancta or otherwise are inherent within the atmospheres you create?

- Yes I agree with this comment. There are no particular messages behind Terra Sancta, but at the same time I hope it invokes a response in the listener. The music is loosely based around a concept of this earthly wasteland that we are part of and the sadness and beauty that resonates from it. The first track I wrote "Desert Earth" sums it up: deserts conjure up contrasting images, harsh barren wastelands, or places of lonely spiritual journeys. Terra Sancta is a world of deserts. I guess that such themes and images are important in initiating the creative process, but once started the sounds themselves are what drive it.

Given the premier American label Malignant Records holds the honour of releasing your official full length debut "Aeon", how did this signing come about and was there a great deal of interest from other labels?

- I just sent a CDR to Jason and he wrote back with great enthusiasm wanting to release it. This was a pleasant surprise as I didn't hear anything from him when I sent my "Anno Domini" demo to him a couple of years earlier. Obviously he likes the progression of the music. Only a couple of other people have heard it so far, but the reaction has been good.

As Terra Sancta can be viewed in context of a small but growing Australian scene of dark ambient artists, how do you view this within the global



Eno sort of idea. When I heard that the bass player from Emperor had quit the band to work on a synth project I was very curious and tracked down the CMI "And Even Wolves..." compilation, and that's how I discovered industrial/dark ambient music.

I played around with various styles for a while, but it wasn't until 1999 that I began to work seriously on the concept that became Terra Sancta, culminating in my demo CD "Anno Domini 2000".

Where did you derive your project name from and how do you believe that it represents (if at all) both your own personality and the music that you create?

- Terra Sancta translates literally as 'sacred earth'. It is a historical term for the 'holy land' of Israel/Palestine. I thought it was an interesting name as it refers to a place of such reverence for three religions, but also a place of perpetual conflict. Musically, Terra Sancta reflects this spiritual aura as well as the darker undercurrents. However I don't intend to make any political or religious statement with this music, and I look at the project name and song names more as metaphors.

Your first recording was a three track mini cdr/demo "Anno Domini" that whilst obviously influenced by the dark ambient sounds associated with a number of Cold Meat Industry artists, managed to retain its own personality and flair. How did you approach the writing and recording process when setting about making your first recordings and do you think you were successful in achieving the results you initially intended?

- I wanted to create something that mixed beautiful sounds like choirs and strings with darker drones and industrial sounds. My CMI influence was fairly obvious, but hopefully it does have its own sound and style. I am happy with it as a first body of work.

What response did you receive from the release of the mini cdr/demo "Anno Domini" and how

I have really found my niche with this album. It was a conscious effort to create a deeper, darker sort of brooding ambience. I have done away with sampled melodies and vocal samples are used more sparingly and subtly. A lot of the sounds have been sampled myself and synth is used just to complement some parts, rather than being the main sound source.

Do you find the composition process difficult? Likewise when commencing the composition of a track do you have a clear idea of what you want to achieve or do they tend to evolve on their own accord as you progress? Additionally is Terra Sancta your first endeavour at creating or playing musical compositions?

- The hardest thing about the composition process is getting the time to sit down and do it. The process itself comes fairly naturally once I have got my mind into 'the zone'. I usually have a general idea of what I want before I start, but since the process involves a lot of auditioning and treatment of sounds you can't fully predict the final result.

Before Terra Sancta became a defined project I recorded a few other pieces of music covering a variety of styles, but these were just part of an experimental, formative phase. Some of it is still quite listenable and who knows, maybe it will find itself reworked as part of a soundtrack or something, but it wouldn't be under the name Terra Sancta.

What equipment and production processes do you utilise in creating your dark ambient atmospheres and has this altered at all over time?

- I have a couple of synths and sound modules, but most of the sound manipulation and song construction is software-based. I use synths less now and try to get my own samples as raw materials, but there will always be a place for synths, vocal samples etc. But all this equipment is damn expensive, and there is always another piece of hardware or a software plug-in that you want to buy, so this better start paying soon!

scene? Do you care to mention any other Australian projects you may be aware of?

- Australia has always had a small but significant contingent of artists working in peripheral forms of music, and a few have made a name for themselves on the international scene. We are home to one of the premier labels - Dorobo Records, which I am a great fan of, especially Alan Lamb's wire music. I am in contact with David Tonkin whose dark industrial project Isomer has just released a CD on Tesco. I don't have a great knowledge of this music scene, but I know there are other people doing similar things.

Apart from your debut full length that is to be soon issued on Malignant Records, do you have any other Terra Sancta recordings in the pipeline?

- Most of the sounds for the next album have been collected but the actual recording process won't begin until the new year, so I guess it's a bit premature to say much more than that at this point.

Also I am aware that you operate a side project under the name of Gun Metal Grey, with the one track from the project I have heard indicating a death industrial type sound. What information would you like to provide on this side project and how do you view its importance when considered against Terra Sancta?

- This is a project I have played around with for a couple of years. It has a noisier more industrial sound. There are several half-recorded tracks lying around and I hope to finish the first album sometime in 2003. For now Terra Sancta is my main project, but how far I go with Gun Metal Grey will depend on the response to it and how much time I can dedicate to it. I have lots of other musical ideas, but if and when I can work on them also depends on finding the time.

Finally, are there any further comments you would like to add?

Thank you for your time!



NAME(s):

Kirsten Veestraete, Dirk Valkenburg, Geert Vandeweert, Frank Vanhoof, Jan Roggen, Luc Tureluren, Frank Gorissen, and sound engineer - Jan Valkenburg

LOCATION:

Hoeselt - Belgium

YEAR PROJECT WAS FORMED:

1990 it became a percussion band, before that (starting from 1986) it was an electronic two members formation.

LIST OF RELEASES:

"New European Order" 3 LP set
"Kingdom of Our Lord/Maschinenzimmer" mCD
"Pain/Familiedrama" 7 inch with Laura Maes and Mike Dando (aka Con-Dom)
"Nature Revealed" 2CD in wooden box
"Black Flag Hoisted" 2CD in fold out cover
"The Eco-Anarchic Manifesto" book + live CD

FORTHCOMING:

"Everything is One" CD

COLLABORATION AND COMPILATION WORKS:

"Scorched Earth Policy" (originally a split tape, re-released on Old Europa Café in August, 2002 on CD format, collaboration between Militia and Con-Dom);
One track on "War Against Society", compilation 3 LP project organised by the German Praxis Dr. Bearmann label;
One track on "Ultrason", compilation LP by the French Une label;
A few soundscapes for various Con-Dom works

What were the initial ideas behind the formation of Militia, and how did the members come together to establish the project?

Militia is an instrument for spreading the eco-anarchic ideology and social world view. These ideas are being spread by means of music and statements, films, literature and performances. The method Militia uses while working on their projects is based entirely upon the anarchic way of practicing things - so with constant communication and debate, suggestions and decisions being formed from the basis.

Likewise I believe that there are three main individuals as part of the Militia project, however having seen you perform live there are many more members than this. How does the project operate from the composition and recording stages, through to live executions?

Every individual in the Militia group takes in the same position as all the others, so there are no main individuals as you put it here. Ideas - or better, a "story board" - for a new project always comes from several people in the band. Then I compose the basic music tracks: I write the music notes using a combination of classical music notation and my own symbols. Next step: I play and record this music on synthesizer and sequencer and record the whole on CDR format, this is the so-called basic music tape. With this CDR I go to the other band members and together we compose the additional percussion pieces, the music for the wind instruments and all other instruments involved. Then starts a long period of rehearsing and constant evaluation till the definitive music is finished. At that moment we've already contacted our German label Tactical Recordings and they pay and hire the studio, which is a professional music studio called AnnaBee, lead by the sound engineer Willy Pirotte. This means that we start recording the music and finish a new CD.

Given that many of your tracks are heavily percussive based, how do you approach composing a track? Can you list the instrumentation that you use and likewise do any of the members have formal musical training?

All members are well-trained percussionists, a few also play a variety of wind instruments.

As said before, I write my music in a self developed symbolic notation which all can read. Starting from my notes and the input of the other members, we always find it quite easy to try out, compose and play the additional percussion layers. But it always takes quite a number of rehearsals to get everything right and to start playing it by heart, obviously. When 6 people play different layers of percussion which all have to form one balanced whole together with the basic music tape, this certainly asks for an intensive organisation and lots of practice. Amongst our instruments we count a concrete mill, a chain saw, three empty gas tubes, several empty oil barrels, a radiator, several metal blades suspended on chains and connected on self made standards, metal tubes and plates, but also a big bass drum (timpani), snare drums, djembe, didgeridoo, trumpet and so on...

On a number of releases you have used the tribal instrument called the didgeridoo. Given that this is actually an instrument primarily known to be native to Australian Aborigines, what drew you to utilise this?

At first I used a long metal tube to generate the same sound - using the same technique - that can be made with a real didgeridoo, just because I liked the sound very much and the thing fitted perfectly into the concept. Now Dirk also plays didgeridoo (and we had other didgeridoo players in the past as well) and the combination of the real thing and the metal substitute works quite well. It was a main instrument for our "Nature Revealed" project, also because that work was about primitive human societies and the relation with their natural environment.

With regard to the upcoming album, what details can you provide regarding its sound/style and concepts? Which label will be releasing this item and will it form part of a larger concept? (such as your now completed "New European Order" trilogy).

"Everything is One" will be a kind of conclusion of the pamphlet (small and handy book) I've written, entitled "The Eco-Anarchic Manifesto". It is the philosophical and metaphysical survey in the form of sound of the eco-anarchic ideology as it is proposed in the Manifesto. The style differs from neo-classical music to rhythmic percussion pieces. And we also used conventional but "not-so-obvious" instruments this time, mainly played by a number of new guest musicians... but I will tell no more, we'll keep it a surprise.

I also believe that you are currently involved in the preparation of a book to further expand on the concepts behind Militia. Can you provide some details of this and its planned release? Will it be released under the Militia name and do you hope this book will have a wider appeal than the at best obscure musical genre that Militia inhabits?

The book will be the cover of the live CD we've recorded in Lille. So book + CD will be released in a few months by Tactical Recordings - who organise the releases of all our works for that matter. The book deals with our eco-anarchic principles, social world views, it reveals a possible structure for an eco-anarchic society and it deals with the problems of money, possession, order and solidarity in such a society. We hope that our website will be ready around the same time as the book + CD will be released, because we want to start a discussion forum as well. We're convinced that there will be a need for discussion and information as soon as people will have read this manifesto. It is a strong opposition against ultra right wing ideology, against a society ruled by any form of government, against the abuse of animals and the endangering of our planet. Instead it offers a global community that is strong in structure, based upon solidarity, equality

and autonomy.

Taking a step back and making an overview of the "New European Order" trilogy, when making reference to the first triple LP set of the series (entitled "New European Order"), to my interpretation the underlying political stance was not clearly evident. However to qualify this perception, I am referring to the later two releases in the trilogy ("Nature Revealed" DCD and "The Black Flag Hoisted" DCD), which clearly and concisely put forward Militia's stance through use of lyrics, dialogue samples and text excerpts. Accordingly at the original time of release of "New European Order" triple LP set, did you receive much reaction either positive or negative regarding its potential to be perceived as being ambiguous?

The concept of "Statement Trilogy" was already planned and designed early '90. The basic ideas for the three albums taking part were already written down. At first we wanted to show how our society became what it is now: a sick and corrupt whole of intrigues, a world based upon hatred, greed and lies, a community that masters racism, exploitation, oppression, murder. The first track of the "New European Order" 3LP set is called "Natura Magica", and this was already a link towards the next album, "Nature Revealed". "N.E.O." is a documentary about our society in decay, but it included also the need for an alternative: a society that is not being ruled by corrupt and egocentric people, but based upon mutual respect and autonomy, free also from religion and possession. If some people found it ambiguous, it may be because they didn't see the real concept and ideas behind it, whether they didn't take the time for it, I don't know. Perhaps we also attracted the attention of right wing adepts, but they should have discovered definitely what the Militia ideology really stands for. I have the feeling also that a lot of people in the so-called industrial scene very much like to be ambiguous themselves, dwelling with right wing ideas, symbols and clothing and so on. I sometimes wonder if they really know what they are doing. "Nature Revealed" deals with the other aspect of the eco-anarchic society, namely the environmental side of it. In order to create a basic social structure for this new society, we studied some primitive African communities and looked back at the pre-historical societies and their specific social structures. For this, we've received the guidance and help of the people of the African Museum in Tervuren and the Gallo-Roman Museum in Tongres. Not only did we use their information, but they showed us how to make primitive music instruments (clay flutes, horns, drums...) and how to play them. They also assisted in creating a primitive pre-historical (not existing) language and so on, all useful things for the "Nature Revealed" concept. So "Nature Revealed" was the second part of the statement trilogy and a very important, dealing with the environmental aspects of such a society. In fact, Nature is an equal partner in this social whole. Unfortunately we had some comments about it saying that "Nature Revealed" wasn't "industrial" enough and not "hard" enough. I would like to suggest that those people stay with the conventional noise they like to hear and stay away from music with a deeper continence. If they believe that Militia is going to repeat itself style-wise they're wrong. We'll always adapt and even alter our style of music and the instruments we chose in relation to the concept and the ideas we want to spread. The ideas are the most important aspects, the music plays a supporting role. Music is not art, it is a form of communication. If you're the owner of all three statements, you'll see the whole picture. For those who see, feel or even support our ideas now, the forthcoming book will just be the ultimate confirmation of it all.

Who would be writers, artists, philosophers, musicians, politicians etc. that have inspired or otherwise have common ideals with the concepts behind Militia?

Oh, there are lots of them, and their number is growing. Therefore I would like to suggest only a few of them, as kind of a basic start from which people who are interested automatically can discover and follow connecting and even different streams of information. To start with, please read the books of Proudhon, Bakunin and Kropotkin, or try to find out about the lives and actions of Durutti and Malatesta or the FAI movement. Interesting also are the environmental action groups like GAIA from Belgium and the Animal Liberation Front or the anarchic movement in Amsterdam and Rotterdam (Holland).

Referencing the third installment of the trilogy, on one particular track on "The Black Flag Hoisted" you give clear credence to the militant actions of the animal liberation front. Do you therefore expose a personal view in support of a vegetarian/vegan lifestyle?

Yes, we definitely do so. Fact is that we believe that it is impossible to use such a great number of animals for food on such a huge industrial scale as it is been practised now without abusing, hurting and torturing the animals involved. Different ideas about this topic exist within the Militia group, but all are convinced that, given the current situation, all animals involved suffer. We suggest that at least the number of animals used in the food processing industry should be diminished to a basic limit so that a more gently form of meat processing eco-industry - on a biological basis - should be installed. But we also support the intentions of so many people to stop eating meat completely and turn to a vegetarian/vegan lifestyle. We strongly oppose against the use of animals in laboratories and vivisection, using them for fur or for the manufacturing of other luxurious goods.

Talking on the matter further, what are you opinion between farming of animal products on a mass scale, verses subsistence farming of use of animal products at a collective/community based level?

See above.

What is your opinion of the views held by some eco environmentalist/eco terrorist groups that fundamentally the globe's human population has/is approaching critical mass and cannot sustain continued population growth? They're right. Several reports from international health organisations, global economic/social institutions, Unesco and so on... also point out that the problem of the increasing human population has to be dealt with urgently. It is the basic cause of the major problems we know today: hunger, diseases, starvation, unemployment, over-exploitation of natural resources, drought, corrosion, the extinction of animal species,... and even war... It is quite unbelievable that the Catholic Church still condemns the use of condoms or even sterilisation. We must stop this enormous growth or we will deal with even greater problems in the near future.

Being a Belgium based project what is your view of your country being a member of European Union?

Well, for a start it is a purely economic union, founded just to preserve power and wealth and to increase it. Whether the common people profit from it, I doubt it. Unemployment hasn't been stopped, that's for sure. Secondly they haven't done anything to stop the pollution of our environment, although there is a board installed to deal with these problems. I wonder what the members of the environmental board are doing there, not

much, that's for sure. And next, the people in charge's main objective seems to be the formation of a European Fortress, to keep political and economical fugitives from poor countries or countries at war (or dealing with other major problems) and all people in need out. Militia proposes an open society where everyone can just live where they want to. We stand for the abolition of geographical and institutional borders and the destruction of all forms of governments and leaderships.

Do you view the events of September 11, 2001 as being an extreme manifestation of a growing level of unrest in relation to mass western capitalism?

Religion, economic, financial and military power are the main causes of all problems. Most leaders of the Islam communities deny basic human rights, especially the rights of women and children. America believes it has to rule over the entire world and oblige to everyone their standards of living and handling. There is an ever growing gap between the West and the East, economically and otherwise. Sooner or later this had to happen, triggered as it was by the devastating situation of the Palestinian people. In their utopic world view, Militia propose an atheistic society, not ruled by any government but by the people themselves. Such a society leaves no space for greed, hate or oppression. We need a total re-construction of the present social structures or we'll never find a solution for all world problems. At the contrary, they will increase, they will be worse, actions will be more violent, more deeds will fall.

What is your opinion of the current anti-globalisation movement, both in what it represents and the overall actions that range from peaceful to violent? (and of the later, particularly the violence that is provoked by authoritative intervention).

We support the anti-globalisation movement and propose an alternative solution: the eco-anarchic global solidarity forms a basis for mutual respect and respect for our environment. Starting from the social structure Militia are proposing, we are convinced that we can take on any major problem in the world. To our opinion, the leading governments are well aware of the potentials of the anti-globalisation movement and all other environmental action groups. The only thing they can do to try to stop the increasing power of these movements is to put them in bad daylight towards the public opinion. I wonder if those people who started acting violently during the peacefully organised demonstrations could have been people put deliberately in the "inside", just to start trouble and hand out to the political leaders a reason to condemn all of these action groups.

Making reference again to your live performances, during your live show a variety of footage is projected as a backdrop, but most particularly archival war footage. What attracts you to use this as a visual counterpart to the live rendition of tracks?

The film you refer to shows at first the battle of the communist and anarchist militia against the Russian tsar Peter the Great. Then come pictures of the pope (symbol of spiritual power, supporting the upper classes and the leading governments against the common people), then followed by pictures of the great American crisis (as a symbol for the fragile financial power, shows what can happen if an entire society is based upon wealth and property), then followed by pictures of the Animal Liberation Front in action and at the end you see the battle of the FAI (Italian anarchic movement) against the troops of the fascist leader Mussolini, mixed with images of the first active anarchic communes in Italy and Spain. So the film and the music we play ("The Black Flag Hoisted") form one whole.

In-between the release of parts 2 and 3 of the "N.E.O." trilogy, a two track ep was released. Given that the majority of your releases provide commentary on political, social and environmental issues, this ep included a track entitled "Kingdom of Our Lord" and appears obviously to be leveled at religion and more specifically the church. With limited reference points within this track (text, lyrics, samples etc.), what is your opinion of the church as long established religion and/or social controlling mechanism?

The churches (and we mean all religions here) have lifted the power of the leading class up to a spiritual level. We see this in most early societies, where even in some cases the absolute leader claimed to be a god himself. The position of the Japanese emperor Hirohito for instance shows the same thing, a profound mixture of spiritual laws and civilian laws can be found in most Islam states. Militia also like to point to the fact that the churches have been (and still are for that matter) the organising party of a lot of so-called "holy" wars, starting from early in history to even now. We see armed conflicts and (civilian) wars between Muslims and Zionists, between Protestants and Catholics, Hindus and Muslims and so on... The main role of the churches still is dividing the people and handing out more power to the leading classes. Only in a "free of gods" society men can feel free. As an alternative we propose an atheistic spirituality, in which the beauty of nature and the positive actions of men can be admired and celebrated. The eco-anarchist does not waste his precious time on worshipping gods and kneeling down for the so-called supernatural beings, no, he tries to understand the world and find a scientific and logic explanation for the natural events, trusting only his own eyes and insight and discussing his opinions with others. In fact you can call us materialists, because we only believe in what we see and hear and feel and not in the invisible, in matter and not in spirits. The churches and all inherent symbols and rituals have to be crushed under boot and replaced by a new form of education based upon autonomy and a scientific approach of things!

Moving towards concluding the interview, what are your views of the political context that many bands within the underground scene inhabit or ambiguously flirt with?

You mean the ultra right wing ideas that are being introduced in the industrial scene and the uniformed swastika brigade? Well, we don't know whether to have a good laugh at this or worry instead, but honestly, don't you think it's very silly watching these people dressed up like a combination of Herr Flick from "Allo-Allo" (you know, the English comedy series about a small French village being occupied by the Germans) and members of a Tiroler castrated boys choir, their hair cut like Rudolf Hess had it, with their mad looking faces like frozen meat? Militia deeply dislike their stupid outfit and (that's if they've even got any) the sick ideas that go along with such stupid behavior. Militia stand for the eco-anarchic philosophy which incorporates a deep respect for all people, regardless their cultural background or the color of their skin, and for our natural environment and all the living creatures that inhabit it. No, my dear readers, we don't go searching for camouflage outfit at the nearby American Army Stock, nor do we visit the local hair-dresser's with a silly request and we use "Mein Kampf" only for toilet paper to clean our ass with.

Are there any final points you would like to add?

Yeah, hope to see all good folk on a next occasion. Please don't hesitate to send reply to our discussion forum as soon as our website will be active. If people still want to get our latest album ("The Black Flag Hoisted") please contact us on our e-mail address, which is: mekanorganic@hotmail.com

"ONLY SHEEP NEED A LEADER" - MILITIA



SLOGUN

We live in a culture that celebrates the mundane and ordinary, as if killing was an act of epic proportions deserving of a reward. The truth is falsified, but yet covered in lies of the facts that the world has gotten much more dangerous. As a result, art needs to follow action. We had the pleasure to interview John Balisteri, who gladly answered our questions.

So, how's it going? Anything special to mention out of the ordinary daily routines?

- Well, I guess that the big news is the "History of Violence" 6-CD box set that's coming out soon, my first seven releases all together on six CDs, with a 24 page booklet. Other than that, it's all the same.

What do you do beside Slogun?

- I'm a graphic designer, so I'm always working on stuff like web sites, flyers, etc. But lately I've been going back to drawing a lot. I kind of neglected that for a long time. So I'm trying to draw a little everyday, away from my computer.

Is 'porn lords' some sort of a graffiti designer or just a name for a friend providing you photo material?

- "Porn Lords" is in reference to a group of us here in New York City, who hung out together, got drunk together, and hit porno shops together. We even had a paintball team called the Porn Lords. Sadly, as life goes on, you lose touch with people here and there, so we rarely see each other anymore. By the way, we came upon that name one night when I performed with Bloodyminded (Mark Solotroff) in 1996, and we were drinking afterwards, and were just screaming out "Porn Lords, on the move, making their way...", the lyrics to Mark's song of the same name. Great stuff. As for the graffiti part, that was me doing all of it. I wrote graffiti here in NYC for years around 20 years ago, and still have close ties to that culture. It's actually the most fun I ever had in my life, going out and "bombing".

LITERALLY WRITTEN IN BLOOD

Whose blood is splashed in the package of 'Written In Blood' and what is the source of the picture under the inserts (tied-up girl with chopped head)?

- I honestly do not know whose blood that is. It is either Stephane from Nuit et Brouillard, or Jerome from Propogol. That's just my guess, though. I'm not 100% sure. The guys I just mentioned got most of the artwork together. They did a great job in packing that release! I was very happy!

As reading the lyrics of several publications of yours, I've got a picture that you feel comfortable dealing with filth/white trash. I see you positioning yourself among the filth, and on the other hand I see you as an outsider judging the scum like Robert de Niro in 'Taxi Driver'. Do you have interest on sociological matters or are they just good material to feast/chew on?

- Wow, Sociological matters are what drives me. That's the reason I started doing any of this! I have a very BIG MOUTH on sociological topics. Especially American youth culture and our culture of irresponsibility! I was brought up with my strict Italian parents, and they taught me that I was to be responsible for everything I do. However, in this country, no one wants to take the blame for anything anymore! Just look at those morons trying to sue McDonalds for "making" their children fat!!! It makes me sick to my stomach everyday! I wouldn't say I position myself with the trash, but I do feel that I am

just like anybody else, nothing special, and I cannot stand it that we try to make EVERYONE "special", like we have to make everyone think they are more than they are! Some people were just made to pick up garbage! You know? Not everyone was supposed to be "special" in life! I don't like to judge someone for no reason. But I just love to open my mouth when someone opens theirs! I love debating someone's opinions if they let me know what they are. I'm tired of living in this ultra liberal, pansy assed, demasculated culture of mine. We allow too many people to cry their way to whatever they want, we are afraid to point out anyone's shortcomings, and it's pathetic.

What's the slogan of Slogun?

- Don't really have one, but "Fuck the World" is a good start, or even "Therapy Through Violence".

There's a lot of violence present in your lyrics, at least on the mental side. How does this



aspect affect your personal life? How about your live performances; are they violent?

- Well, I was asked this once before, assuming that the material affects my life. But it's actually the other way around. My life affects my material. Everything I write about is what's already going through my head. Sure, I may throw a "serial killer" spin on it, but it's all stuff I see, feel, or think. The world is an ugly place, and I see it all the time. I guess you can say I'm a pessimist, so it comes through in my material. As for my performances, it depends on the show. I can do a low-key show because I may not be in the right mood. But when I am, I guess they can get confrontational. They should be. All power electronics shows should be teetering on the possibility that someone is going to get hurt, whether it's the performer or the audience. This is not a genre that should have any surprises. I'm tired of people going to these shows, and getting upset when an artist gets a little "too violent" (see the recent "Deadly Actions" and Taint). Fuck it, DO NOT GO TO THESE SHOWS IF YOU DO NOT WANT TO GET HIT!!! It's that easy...

TOP TEN SERIAL KILLERS

Where does your interest for serial killers derive from? Or is it just an easy topic to feature in power electronics?

- I know it seems rather convenient to deal with serial killers/true crime in this genre, but in all honesty I was obsessed with serial killers since I was seven or eight years old. I've been fascinated since the Son of Sam was killing around my neighborhood. His last victim still lives on the same street as my parents! I remember the morning after David Berkowitz's last shootings, the girl died and the man lived, (he was the guy from my street) my dad and I

were walking to buy the morning paper, and there were all these police around, and I remember the victim's mother crying outside the house. It just amazed me. I was reading everything about what happened. Then shortly afterwards the Hillside Stranglers, John Gacy, then a few years later, Richard Ramirez, and Danny Rolling, there seemed to be a new serial killer every month! Anyway, when I did start thinking about doing something like "Slogun", I knew right from the start that I was going to deal with serial killers, and nothing else.

Of all the featured serial killers, which one do you consider being the most fascinating one? Do you at any state fantasize of killing people yourself?

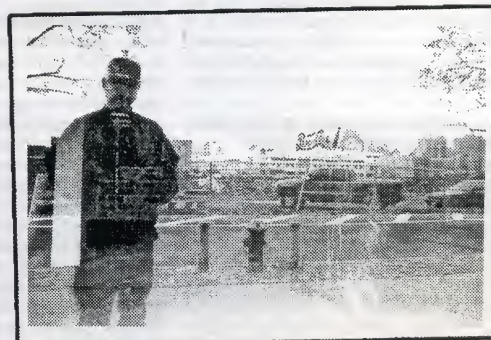
- I've always been really interested in Dean Corll, Carl Panzram, Green River (Until recent events), Jesse Pomeroy, Harvey Glatman. God, there's so many to choose from. Each one is so different from the rest, you know? So each story is incredible in it's own right. As for fantasizing about killing people: Shit, everyday, but not for some stupid "serial killing" reason. I just fucking think so many people do not deserve to live. I'm so tired of all these assholes walking around.

You have been in the noise scene for some time now, how do you see the progression the scene? What influenced you in the first place to start working on harsh elements? What do you want the listener to get out of your powerful material?

- Well, I think that the Power Electronics genre has pretty much stayed the same since I got into it. It really cannot go anywhere because of the material covered by the artists and the actual "sound". It's not going to be the next "big thing". But for a lot of us, that's exactly what we want. We didn't start doing this because of some want of "fame". I guess I was influenced to work with the harsh stuff because of Mark Solotroff of Bloodyminded/Intrinsic Action. We worked together at a record store for years, and he just kept telling me to start something of my own, since I was already listening to bands like Sutcliffe Jugend, Brighter Death Now, Con-Dom, etc. Actually, if it wasn't for Mark, I would have NEVER started Slogun. All I want the listener to get out of my stuff is whatever naturally comes into their head. I do not want someone to feel as if they "have to" see or hear something. It's all up to them. For me, the reason I do this stuff is because I love to deal with things that show people how horrible and nasty we humans really are. We are not these wonderful, loving creatures we like to think we are. We are all full of shit, and we can be very vicious and selfish.

What do you think is the best part of playing live? Is there by any chance a possibility to see Slogun perform in Finland one day?

- The best part of playing live is the release of energy I get. Seriously, it is amazing to scream and yell and hit and grab, telling the audience what you think. I improvise a lot in my live show, and it's just like an open forum for me to spew all my bullshit to those there, watching me. After a show I feel fantastic, totally relieved! I'd love to play Finland someday! I would just like to see the country personally, even if I do not get to play. It can happen in the near future.



TRUE CRIME ELECTRONICS



Does your ordinary day consist of pure electronic music or does it involve a lot of other music as well? What kind of other music do you listen to in that case?

- Actually, I don't really listen to much harsh electronics. I actually still listen to a lot of old punk stuff like Dead Kennedys, Minor Threat, Black Flag, etc. That's my background really. But I listen to everything: all types of music. If I do listen to noise, it'll be Grunt, Proporgol, Soldnergeist, Strict, Anenzephalia, Brighter Death Now, Control, etc. But I can also listen to N.W.A., Virgin Prunes, Bo Diddley, or Death In June. I listen to it all.

Do you have any favourite artists in the noise scene? Do you know any Finnish ones?

- Well, I mentioned some earlier, but here goes: Grunt, Proporgol, Strict, Brighter Death Now, Con-Dom, Control, Anenzephalia, Dagda Mor, Deathpile, Taint, Bloodyminded, Iugula Thor, but there are more. Besides Grunt, all I know is from the compilation CD of Finnish artists, which was really good.

Is there in America a particular noise scene concentrated in a certain area, like the case with Florida death metal in the beginning of the '90's?

- In America there really is no noise scene. It is scattered all over the place, little pockets here and there. Unlike the death metal scene in Florida, or the hardcore scene in New York, the noise scene does not have a central focal point here in the states. Actually, the music scene in general sucks here. A couple of good bands like The Liars, or Interpol.

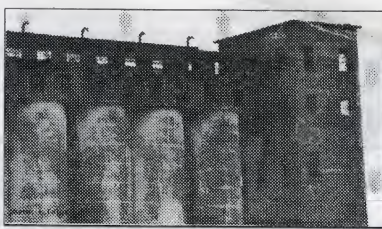
Does anyone assist on any of your works? Would you have other collaborators in Slogun?

- Well, when I record material for a release, it's just me. I do all of the material alone at home. But when I play out live, I am assisted by Sasha and Shane of Noizeguild. They perform with me everywhere. I guess Slogun would always be just me, but I did collaborate with Henrik from Folkstorm/MZ412 on our "Incinerator International" project, and am soon working with one of my favorite acts, Jerome from Proporgol on "America 2".

Thanks for your time and patience, and for the end; anything you wish to channel to the readers?

- This is for all those people who "listen" to Power Electronics, yet seem to be surprised or shocked by violence during a show. GET OFF OF IT!!! DO NOT LISTEN TO THIS STUFF, OR ATTEND A POWER ELECTRONICS SHOW, IF VIOLENCE OFFENDS YOU!!! In this genre, NOTHING should shock you!!! Events at a recent festival make me feel that people just do not get it. This is a very violent, extreme genre, and I would think that by the time you got to this point, to listen to this stuff, you've heard or seen it all. Nothing should upset you! Now, you may not agree with what the performer says, but to be shocked and offended. Give me a break! And another thing: DO NOT JUDGE A PERFORMER BY HIS PERFORMANCE! Just because the artist is doing something extreme, it doesn't mean he's out there fucking chickens or skinning young boys! Get to know the artist before saying shit about them on those dumb news groups!!! And with that, all the best to you, and thanks to those who give a shit!

www.slogun.com



From the end of 1996 until 2001 Andrew Seal released noise and performed live as Praying for Oblivion. In 2002 Praying for Oblivion stopped and Andrew started a new project, Tote Stadt. He also founded a label, Radio Obsolete Recordings. In July 2002 I asked him some questions.

Andrew, let's first talk about Praying for Oblivion for those who haven't heard from you before. How and when did you get involved with noise/experimental music in the first place?

- I first became interested in noise and experimental music in 1994, when I became involved in the noise scene here in Buffalo N.Y. I became friendly with members of 666 volt battery noise, Shock box! Studios, and towpath - and my own involvement stemmed from there.

Did you do something before Praying for Oblivion or was that your first project?

- From 1994 until 1996 I performed in and around the Buffalo area under a few different names, doing small noise actions on any bill I could find my way onto - house parties, and even a "battle of the bands"... needless to say we didn't win that battle... Praying for Oblivion really began to take shape toward the end of 1996.

In the first question I spoke about noise/experimental music. Is that a good way of describing your output? Can you describe what Praying for Oblivion sounds like?

- I would say P.F.O. was experimental in approach - because of my constant changing of collaborators the project never had the exact same sound on each recording. The sounds ranged from grating power-electronics and harsh-noise, to death industrial, and even ventured into some dark, organic ambient styles.

Can you tell me something of your releases as Praying for Oblivion?

- Well, from 1996-early 1998 I released two demo cassettes in limited edition of 20 each. After those came "Technology of Mass Extermination" in 1998. In early 1999, I co-released a great split 7"ep with Napalmed, a split cassette with JA, and in summer 1999 came the split cassette with The Violet Grind and my biggest "hit" CD "The Love

TOTE STADT

Generation". We moved to Nashville, Tn. In July 1999, and our time there saw the releases of "The Fear Experiments" 7", the "Swan Song" CD, and the split 7" with Outermost. Also in 2000-01, we had a couple of great cassettes released on Xerxes and Hospital Productions and within the last year, the final P.F.O. releases as a live CD30 on 1-Touch, a split CDR with Noisebitch on Anima Mal Nata, a collab./3 way CDR on RR'sR, and a split CD with Lava on Bar La Muerte.

In some P.F.O. releases I noticed references to Christianity, besides the name "Praying for Oblivion" and some song titles. Why is that? Are you very religious or is there some other reason?

- No, we're not religious people here, at least not in a typical sense. I don't believe in imposed moralities, which I believe religion is. Just like T.V., it's the "opiate of the masses" - it's mind control. I believe in guiltless, free-thought, which most religions do not promote in any way, shape, or form.

Part of the thematic/lyrical content of P.F.O. dealt with the mind-control aspects of religion. I'm not anti-religious, I just believe in my own morality.

Why did you decide to stop with Praying for Oblivion and what will be your new monicker?

- I took P.F.O. to its limit and beyond, as far as I'm concerned. When I started doing P.F.O., I never expected to have the opportunity to release the CDs and records that I did, let alone tour Europe twice. Now, I want to try something different, with a new name, new goals and new ideas. The new project consists of my wife, Lacy Folga, and myself. We call our project TOTE STADT.

Tote Stadt is German for "Dead City". Why this name?

- We call the project Tote Stadt, because that is where we live, a Dead City. Buffalo is an old industrial-port city on the border with Canada that has shrunk in population from 600,000 at its peak in 1900, to about 290,000 where it stands now. Needless to say, with all of that population drama, a lot of old buildings have been left to the elements. Buffalo is a city full of rusty old factories, junk yards, a huge abandoned train station and mental asylum, and lots of burned out, boarded up houses. It's one of our favourite hobbies to break into these buildings and document them with photographs.

Do you also find interesting objects in those buildings that you can use to create your sounds?

- The guitar I've been using on the new recordings was taken from an abandoned house... it's a loud noisy "piece of shit" by a rock musicians' standard, but it works, and it has personality... we're thinking of packaging some future releases with bits and pieces of debris from the buildings we've visited.

What is the difference between Tote Stadt and Praying for Oblivion? Can you tell me something about the musical soundsources and about the equipment you use?

- The biggest difference you'll hear is the vocals - Lacy handles vocal duties on this project, not me. You'll also notice some actual songwriting

involved with Tote Stadt, with some improvisation. Tote Stadt is definitely noise, just more structured than P.F.O. As for equipment, we've been using a Roland Juno-6, a Casio SK-1, an Alesis SR-16 drum machine, as well as guitar, bass and vocals through as many effects that we can get our hands on! P.F.O.'s sound was more strictly based on synthesizers, contact mics, and constructed instruments.

What are your influences? What inspires you to make the music you make?

- Life in this dead city is the single biggest influence on our music. I think that our boredom and frustration come out in our music, as well as our joy. I'm personally influenced by the writings of Philip K. Dick. I think the messages in his work are very relevant to life in America, especially these days. Musically speaking, we listen to a lot of things, and lately we've been listening to Crass, Sun-Ra, Dead Kennedys, Medicine, Einsturzende Neubauten, Killing Joke, Curve and Front 242.

Do you listen to your own music?

- Sometimes, not too often though. It's kind of redundant.

I know that you are planning a European tour. What can you tell me about that? What countries are you going to visit? What will a Tote Stadt performance be like?

- We're putting together our third trip to Europe for November 2002, and as of right now it looks like we'll be stopping in Holland, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and hopefully Slovenia and Italy. Our performances will be loud, chaotic and spontaneous with massive audience casualties...

You performed before as Praying for Oblivion. How did the audience react? Do you see a difference between a European and American audience?

- Performing as P.F.O., audiences reacted favourably in Europe, staying and listening to our entire set, applauding and cheering and seeming genuinely interested in what we had to offer. There was a really strong energy to most of the places we played in Europe, a strong sense of unity in the underground. In the U.S., it's easy to clear out an entire room within 10 minutes. It's also easier to get into a fight with the club owners or patrons and have your power shut off.

What do you expect from the audience?

- I never know what to expect from an audience. In the U.S., it's really funny to look out at an unsuspecting crowd and see legions of uncomfortable, annoyed people and then to be confronted by one of them who thought they were getting a rock concert. In Europe, it's great to see people taking in the whole experience because it is new, not predictable, and listening with an open mind. The only thing I dislike in an audience is indifference.

How do you explain these different reactions from American and European audiences?

- I don't know the real reasons as to why. I would guess that it has to do with any given audience's exposure to noise and experimental music and their willingness to try something new if they haven't been exposed. European audiences, generally speaking, seem to have been exposed to more of this type of music, and more willing to listen if it is

something totally new and different to them. Performing for European audiences has been a good experience for us.

Performing in the U.S. has been very hit and miss, but still fun. However, in my opinion, performing in Europe is more fun and more worthwhile.

Touring costs a lot of money. Why do you do it?

- Honestly, touring isn't that expensive if you're not the "rock-star" type. If you can manage to go without bathing everyday and sleeping on floors occasionally, you can tour pretty inexpensively. When we tour, we stay with friends, in squats, and occasionally youth hostels. All of our friends have been more than generous in providing us some food and a place to sleep, and this helps keep our costs down. The main expense is the flight over which is about \$500, round trip. We love touring and seeing new places and cultures. It's worth the price just to meet so many supportive, like-minded people.

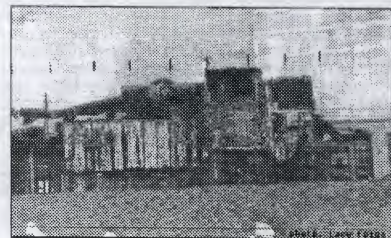
You've started a new label. Why, after all these years? Weren't you satisfied with the way your music was released by others anymore?

- The new label, RADIO OBSOLETE RECORDINGS, is a way for us to present our work as Tote Stadt as well as other projects we believe in. In one case with P.F.O., the project's true aim and motivations became distorted by the direction the label decided to take. With Radio Obsolete, we can record at our own pace and have control over our output, while creating a place to showcase interesting new musicians from all over the world.

Are there any special people/projects that you would like to work with? Any other future plans?

- We've just released a split cassette between Tote Stadt and the Nautilus Deconstruction from Berlin, and we're putting together a split with Fever Spoor on CDR, and Allun on 7" vinyl. We're hoping to work with Napalmed again soon as well as Hermit. Look for us in Europe in November 02', as well as these new releases. Our split C60 with The Nautilus Deconstruction is available for 5 dollars/euros, and everyone is encouraged to get in touch with us. Thanks for the interview Marcell!

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WARCOM

If you are into noise music and underground culture, you should be aware of the label Warcom Media, or at least of its notorious reputation. Considering that this is an *underground* scene, people in it seem awfully sensitive and careful not to cross mainstream opinion. Some individuals and record companies have been all upset and offended by the supposed agenda of Warcom Media, but as its founder has pointed out in an earlier interview, Warcom really lacks any clear agenda, and that people usually ignore the "commedia"-part of Warcom Media. To quote the founder Beau himself: "The main goal for WM is to push boundaries. If someone says an area is not to be explored, then I'll take WM there, because people say we shouldn't explore areas that they fear, and where fear lies are fields ripe for knowledge, sometimes even ripe for wisdom. And that is where much of the controversy WM has generated lies. In feared places."

Warcom Media was founded in 1994 in San Jose, California. Warcom Media has released compilation CDs, CD-Rs, cassettes and 7" singles by Book & Sword, Robert X. Patriot and the White Devil Conspiracy, Hagall, as well as its founders own project, Warcom. One of the more (in)famous of the Warcom Media releases, and the first one I got my hands on, is the compilation CD "Men Among Mice" (released sometime around 1998), which featured many artists and musicians from the occult and fascist undergrounds, all together on the same disc. Among these were **Book and Sword** (sonic outlet of Sarote Industries, a "right-wing avant-garde" collective), **James Mason** (infamous Mansonite National Socialist revolutionary and author of "Siege", described as "the Mein Kampf of the 90's" or "the mind-fuck of the century"), **Coup De Grâce** (long-defunct noise project of then-15 year old Michael Moynihan, these days known as the author of "Lords of Chaos" and conductor of cult band Blood Axis), **Tan Trick** (project of occultist writer/photographer/publisher/artist/musician Carl Abrahamsson, formerly of White Stains), **Charles Manson** (does he need an introduction?), **Soul of Steel** (electronic project of Robert N. Taylor-artist, author and musician behind one of the first "apocalyptic folk" bands, Changes), **Streicher** (see interview in Degenerate #1), **Robert X. Patriot & The White Devil Conspiracy**, Warcom and a few others. Musically it was as diverse as the artists featured on it, ranging from noise to ambient to spoken word.

Many years in the making, "Plan 8 From Outer Space" is one of the latest offerings on the Warcom label. This is another compilation with most of the above described artists and MANY more, united on a disc that takes its name from the classic b-movie by Ed Wood, "Plan 9 From Outer Space". More extreme than "MAM" and a lot more bizarre, "Plan 8" represents much of what is best and worst about Warcom Media.

Warcom Media also used to put out a small-in-size, but huge-in-hate newsletter, The Warcom Gazette, that featured commentary (of a "less than savory" nature, as one reviewer put it) on various issues, events and people. In addition to this it also featured interviews from an often humorous angle with many prominent underground figures like Jim Goad (guy behind Answer ME! magazine and author of the books "Redneck Manifesto" and "Shit Magnet"), Michael Moynihan, James Mason and others. Although each issue was only a couple of short and sweet pages, its punches certainly hit home (and even if they didn't, they certainly hit hard), contrary to many of the poorly-written and poorly-thought magazines out there.

If you dare to look behind all the controversy surrounding Warcom Media and its founder, and whether or not you agree with his views, you will discover that Beau is a sincere man who isn't afraid to speak his mind, no matter how unpopular or unpleasant what he speaks might be. And in an underground full of obfuscation, empty posturing and pseudo-elitism, this is really what separates the wheat from the chaff.

Firstly, introduce yourself and Warcom Media to the readers. How did you develop an interest in noise music and extreme culture?

- I have a brother five years older than me who used to bring home all kinds of music in the early '70s, so I grew up listening to 8-track tapes of New York Dolls and Mott the Hoople and Yes, reggae and blues, the soundtrack to "A Clockwork Orange." He had Lou Reed's feedback classic, "Metal Machine Music." I can't say I enjoyed Reed's noise classic a hell of a lot at the time, but it was intriguing and bizarre. Pretty fucking mindblowing. I'd listen to it over and over, trying to figure out what the hell feedback really was and why it was making those particular sounds. That was when I was 11 years old. My brother and my mom read a lot, too, so I was always trying to read what they were reading. Those influences hooked me into always looking outside the box. Not that I needed much encouragement to do that. I've rarely felt quite at one with my peers. Much of the time from a very early age I felt isolated and apart. Very few people seemed to think enough and feel enough. And I was a night owl from an early age, staying up late, searching out odd shows on the TV and radio. By the time I turned 15 in the mid-to-late '70s I was full on into punk and new wave and listening to some of the early industrial, TG, Boyd Rice's "Knife Ladder." When Search and Destroy magazine out of San Francisco turned into Re/Search, that was it, I was completely a goner. That stuff vitalized me like nothing else. The energy behind the late '70s-early '80s industrial culture scene was what I'd been thirsting for.

I'd been on the fringes of punk promo and sung in a couple one-week bands in the late '70s, done some sound experimentation with tape and tape recorder manipulation in the early '80s, then

concentrated on college and adventures and art and writing until I founded Warcom Media in '94.

What is your musical background? Do you have any lasting influences in these realms of music? What equipment do you use?

- I played drums a bit when I was in second grade. I had a kit until I was in sixth grade or so. Fooled around with an untunable Chinese Les Paul copy in my teens. Sang a little and played lots of harmonica back then, too. The \$40 guitar I now use stays tuned for about two minutes at best, but I don't know how to tune anyway, so it suits me fine. I have a children's violin, toy pianos and a toy accordion, a children's rap workstation, an Arp Solus, Emu Emax, Alesis drum machine, military spec signal generators, a theremin, a Stylophone, numerous software synths and sequencers, and a collection of electronic gadgets and things.

Lasting influences? Well, the mid '70s-early '80s punk-new wave-industrial era is the most powerful lasting influence. So many astounding ideas and actions just kept hitting. You never knew what you'd see or hear next. While scenes and all their trappings would spring up, there were so many individuals working from integrity and espousing following no one and nothing but your own heart, your own creativity. I found all that very inspiring. Still do.



Have you ever performed live with Warcom, and if not, have you ever considered doing this?

- Only rare, private live shows back in the beginning. "Praise the Lord!" off "Blutkitt" is from one of those live events. I don't think I've done any since '95. Every once in a while I think about doing them again.

Why did you stop putting out The Warcom Gazette?

- To start off here, I really have to admit that with the early Gazettes sometimes I went out of my way to be a complete asshole. I spewed forth a good amount of misplaced hatred and anger. I feel sorry about that now. The older I get, the more fucked up I see myself then. Not that I'm not still fucked up in some ways! But to be honest, sometimes I would've done better taking a deeper look into myself. That said, the Gazette presses stopped because I felt trapped. Really annoyed. It was taking far too much time away from what I really wanted to do. The writing of it was fun enough, but the envelope stuffing was taking more and more time. And the letters of inquiry with a million and one ridiculous questions and requests, shit. The Gazette put me in touch with many amazing people but it primarily brought me far too many lunatics I never knew existed who for no good reason demanded that I bend over backwards to appease them and their selfish whims. And when I wouldn't, they would write back the most idiotic hate mail. No big deal, but the whole process became a drain.

Could you give a general outline of your world view? Do you have any lasting influences in terms of philosophies and ideas? Which does and thinkers have you found to be particularly inspirational?

- I think we do what we do to fuck. Not just anybody. To fuck who we feel we deserve to fuck. To show off what we've got, to attract sexual partners. And more often than not, we're at least consoled with finding friends, people with similar thoughts and interests. If we're a bit deeper, we'll do what we do to show we can harmonize

with a person who reflects our depths.

I really can't say that I have any lasting philosophical influences, just the idea that no matter how fucked up we or the world might be, in the end we make the beds we lie in. We're responsible for ourselves.

I'm very inspired by athletes. Like Johan Bruyneel riding off the cliff in the '96 Tour de France, landing in a tree. When he got back up to the road he immediately asked for his bike, then pushed to finish 20th on the stage. Brilliant. Now he's in charge in the USPS team that's brought Lance Armstrong so much success. Armstrong is another great inspiration and I highly recommend his book *It's Not about the Bike*. When I went to my first World Motorcycle Grand Prix, a Japanese rider on a 125 crashed hard right in front of me. He hopped up and hobbled over to his bike, picked it up and got it running again! He was obviously hurt but he was completely committed to the job he had to do. His injuries were so bad, though, that he only made two corners before crashing again. The race was red flagged until he was carted off in the ambulance. I don't remember who that rider was, but he's been a great inspiration to me over the years, far greater than any thinker. There are hundreds of racers the world over, from club level on up, showing the same inspiring, complete commitment.

Outside of sport, I also find an architect like Rem Koolhaas or a designer like Vivienne Westwood intriguing and inspiring, not just in their vision but in their depth, in their seeing things through, in their forwardness. When Westwood talked about getting over her punk days, she talked about the establishment being like a car going 100 miles per hour and how, if you want to have an impact on the world, to change things, subvert things, well, throwing a rock at it might slow the establishment a moment but then it'll just speed up a bit more. So what you've got to do is go 200 miles per hour. That's brilliant. I love people who think and do. She's proven herself good at that.

Do you see yourself and Warcom being in some way on the same wavelength as the Italian Futurists? You seem to have many parallels- violence and aggressivity, war as "the sole hygiene of the world", the love of speed, energy and motion etc.

- I don't agree that war is the sole hygiene of the world. But, yes, very much on the same wavelength. I see very many of my endeavors in this way. Arrogance. Modernity. Technology. Violence. Action. Speed. Science. Dynamics. Danger. Courage. Vibration. The architecture of the human mind and the aesthetics of numbers. Cubism. Dada. Theatre of Cruelty. Art Brut, pop, they all have their place in my schemes. Even Symbolism: Akin to Previati back in 1910 considering painting the concept of sleep, "Dancing in Dreamtime," my first Warcom release, was a sonic attack on the idea of sleep. Robert X used to say it was the only music that would calm him down. But no art movement has effected me so strongly as the Futurists. In my work I do a great deal of playing with time, with superimposing sounds, with processing numbers into the musical and noise equations. When Marinetti kicked things off with his Founding Manifesto of Futurism, he wrote of his steering wheel as a guillotine blade that threatened him as he and his driving pals "ran after Death." There's a bit of a reflection of that in "Sennacherib." Steering column failure was the catalyst for Senna's death. And, in that I generally work with frequencies rather than notes, I can more specifically engage and interact with listener's emotions, a concept important to Futurists. And I often isolate sounds in the intervals and process/mix specifically for those sounds, not the more prominent sounds you'd expect. Sometimes it gets quite laborious and ridiculous, but I get obsessive and can't let go until the sounds are right to me in the entire context of the work and also in the sensibilities awoken by the work. This is natural to my method, so I don't utilize these techniques as tricks or anything, but they are Futurist. As is intersecting another plane or extending a line to more honestly portray the reality of movement and change. The techniques are as pure sonically as they are visually. I love music and sound torn off from what is and what has been, music ripped out of oneself with no reference, from isolation.

What does blood symbolize or mean to you, as it's a recurring theme in your works; for example, your former project was called Blood Cement and you have a song titled "Blood is Love"?

- When people speak of lifeblood, such as Marinetti saying images are the lifeblood of poetry, lifeblood is the essential element. Without blood, the analogy, the reflection, would not exist. The bloodless Vampyr vanishes in the mirror. My interest in blood is not parasitical but reflective. The vital substance of blood symbolizes life.

"Blutkitt" was an interwar German sociology term describing how blood binds the criminal gang together. Even Wally on the "Leave It to Beaver" show got it right when he moralized, "Blood is thicker than dirt." So while blood is the substantive conduit of life, it also is a binding agent. It carries all the oxygen, nutrients and everything else our bodies need, and it also plugs our leaks. As binding in ritual, blood cements us to result. It thus becomes commitment to life.

When I was very young I had the habit of replacing the word "love" with the word "blood." All you need is blood. Blood is the Law, Blood under Will. I bleed you. So when I said "Blood is Love,"

if you replace blood wherever people talk or write or sing about love, you might get a far better idea of what they really mean. And, on an aside, since money is said to be the root of all evil, and all money aims to buy love, blood is the root of all evil. Here, blood bites its own tail. It's the ouroboros. It's extreme emotion, love and hate where they touch.

With songtitles like "Sieg Heil!" and "White Man", could you explain your views on race and racial matters? Obviously, you don't share the starry-eyed idealism of most racialists.

- While it can be more personal, race is primarily a social concept. When people speak of race, generally they speak of people they consider their people. But, you know, people are involved. And when people are involved, we're fucked. White people, generally, just like every other racial and ethnic category, are complete assholes. And why are most people such jerks? I think it's because most every pussy wants to prove it's more deserving of cock than any other pussy and most every dick is trying to prove it's more worthy of twat than any other dick. (And for those who are homosexual, well, put it this way: Most every dick and pussy wants to think it's the be-all, end-all. Period.)

The first blatantly racial writings I ever came across were the Black revolutionary texts of George Jackson. I was 12 and had no idea anyone would ever conceive to split the world into races and want to kill on that basis. The fact that people hated me and wanted me dead for something I had no control over gave me a strange feeling of hopelessness I never felt before. And then, so many years later, the Metzger trial (*Tom Metzger, founder of White Aryan Resistance - ed. note*) took place in Oregon, which was obviously a freedom of speech issue. Some White guys listen to a message on a White revolution phone machine encouraging them to do bad things to nonwhites, they do, and Metzger's group operating the phone machine gets a multimillion dollar penalty against them in civil court. It was outrageous. I was in college at the time, very liberal, majoring in sociology, and I knew from my readings in Black revolution that had someone of any other race set up a phone machine like that, there was no way in hell a case like this would even come up. It was a bizarre, dangerous, racist precedent. I have no problem with punishing people who act criminally, but expression of thoughts, no matter how unpopular or hateful, should never be punished, at least not in the court system. Unless it's yelling "Fire!" in a movie theater, laws for which are already on the books to protect people in crowd situations from injuries that could be attributed to malicious incitement of panic. Even to a liberal sociology student, the Metzger case was clearly not that.

Several of my Warcom Gazettes were in reaction to that and to numerous other similar goings-on in the USA at that time. Racial issues were big in the public mind during the early '90s, and as I started reading about them after the Metzger trial, I saw the same few players, some of them criminal organizations, getting uncritical press for their sickeningly vapid points of view. They were complete bigots, more Nazi than the White revolution groups they despised. I don't care who it is or what point of view. When you're not open to question, when you're not open to exploration, you're an asshole. Not a shred of information, just emotion and a demand that everyone unthinkingly accept their emotion as the only valid emotion. Hell, it might be the only valid emotion, but bigotry is no way to education or illuminate. Bigotry is intellectually bankrupt and the people in these groups were the most bigoted pigs I'd ever read. So I skewered them in my Gazette. In my silly, small-minded way.

Jim Goad had some sage words when I interviewed him, which puts all this into a more realistic perspective. (And Woody Allen acted the sentiment long before they came out of Goad's mouth, as a hilariously, hopelessly depressed child on the psychiatrist's couch. Cioran noted it even earlier, as I'm sure had many others.) Whether it's the sun going supernova or Haley's comet taking us out, the earth will die and we and everything we accomplish will be forgotten, obliterated. In the overall scheme of things, race concerns are not important. Nature isn't all that worried about the purity which racists claim uber-important. In fact, the more varied the genes between the two healthy parents, the greater the viability of the offspring.

On the smaller, personal level, social constructs like race don't energize me. I find race interesting in how groups use the concept to exploit sympathy, money, and zombie-ism. But social constructs aren't all that helpful in personal development. Race, for the most part, is irrelevant. We're responsible for ourselves.

I quote from a Warcom track "Natural Exploitation": "Exploitation is a fundamental law of nature/The law shall win/Share ever rule/Take pleasure in exploiting that which is made to serve you/Strength prevails/This is the will of life/This is the will of nature." Do you consider yourself a social Darwinist?

- Maybe I should have added a word or two, saying a prayer for that which serves.... Those lyrics were written nine years ago and reflect on natural selection. Exploitation is the discriminating life-blood of selection. Or perhaps only a cruder replacement for the word "selection." I would like to remove the stigma attached to the word discrimination. Discrimination is not bigotry, but the ability to differentiate. Discriminating taste is sensibility raised a notch. I think everyone's senses ought to be raised a notch. We all want to maximize what we get from life, exploiting what comes our way

for our own comfort and joy. Not that we exploit all the time. Most of life we let pass by. But when we want someone we often exploit the person we desire attention from. We put our best foot forward, present ourselves as so much bigger and better than we are, to win them over, control their emotions, take or win their love. If we're more highly evolved we sacrifice much of ourselves to the relationship, creating a symbiosis, though usually only if the other continues to allow themselves to be exploited for our self-interest. That's pretty cold, isn't it? After what I've just said, honestly, I don't think it's healthy to err too far on the side of heartlessness.

I'd like to see social-Darwinism expand beyond survival. Survival is easy. I'd like to see it penetrate into Darwin's explorations of sexual selection. So, no, I don't see myself as a social Darwinist as much as a sexual selectionist.

Is Warcom a reflection of your world view, or is it more like a vehicle to air controversial, feared or extreme ideas?

- The Warcom Gazette began more as a vehicle to air controversial, feared, extreme hatred, mixed heavily with humor and truth. My worldview at that time played a part in it, but more often I wanted to piss people off, people who thought it was OK to be bigoted but only in their own fashion. The music label Warcom Media is a vehicle to air all that and more, including cutting edge electronic music, pretty things and even challenges to the controversy, hatred and fear. My personal music entity, Warcom, is more honestly a vehicle to air my own personal impressions, interests, occasionally worldview. "Christianity is Queer" has nothing to do with my worldview, beyond having a demented laugh occasionally. I thought about what I'd like to hear if I switched on the AM radio on any given Sunday while driving through some Southern state. "The Rule Will Smash the Exception" track off "Warkommen" more accurately expresses my worldview, though a bit more dramatically than honestly. I'm far less pessimistic about love and enchantment nowadays. Most Warcom entities reflect on a very dark period I went through in the early to mid-'90s.

You are a member of the Church of Satan. What part does Satanism play in your life? What aspects of Satanism do you find most interesting?

- The evocative aspects. The angles. The fearless will to explore all aspects of life without blinders on. The personal responsibility.



The provocativeness. The illumination of darkness. The fact that when you look behind the stigma of any fear, there's no bogeyman.

I've always enjoyed my nightmares and the adrenaline rush of fear. From seances and Ouija boards when I was five years old, I've felt very comfortable with and attracted to the obscure and the macabre. When I was five I was already in trouble for reasoning with a Catholic school pal, "If God is in heaven and you have to die to get to heaven, then God must be dead." His mom overheard me. That was a neighbor I never got to visit again. She grabbed him, yanked him into the house, and told me never to come back, then slammed the door. I just thought, wow, how strange not to allow yourself to wonder. I was a bit confused but I remember that as being the first time in my life that I truly felt sorry for someone else.

As well as Laurel and Hardy and Three Stooges comedies, I've always loved old horror movies, and movies about witches and ghosts. From the time I was a child, I wanted these movies to be real, the comedies and the horror movies. While other kids were fixated on the latest it-girl or it-boy sitcom star, back when I was in middle school Veronica Lake in "I Married a Witch" was the dream I wanted real. From the original "Nosferatu" and "Häxan" to the films of David Lynch and Tim Burton, I feel a resonance deep within, not just enchantment but harmony. I always watched

"Creature Features" on TV every Saturday night with Bob Wilkins, where Bob would host these amazing schlock b-movies. The unbelievably bad garbage that most of these movies so terribly were absolutely fascinated me. And not just the stories but the sounds and the sound effects. Eerie, violent. Once, my parents were away on Halloween and me and my sister and her boyfriend made a fire and were watching scary movies. He tossed a log on the fire as it was dying and out jumped a large tarantula! It moved quick. Terrifying. I love all that.

Also, my mom is from New Orleans. So I'd been to the bizarre graveyards there. And we'd had our voodoo doll. Very evocative.

When a high school history teacher said we could do an extra credit assignment, I was already getting a top grade and didn't need to do one, but it struck me that I had to look into the Salem Witch Trials. I'd never even been interested in them before and the strength of my desire to look into them surprised me, that I somehow felt this unnaturally strong odd connection to that part of American history. But it just hit me that I had to do a paper on them. Some strange affinity.

I'd been listening to Throbbing Gristle since the late '70s and when PTV split off with the Temple of Psychic Youth, I found that really energizing.

In the late '80s and early '90s I was focused on college. Productive in personal ways but not doing much of anything above ground. I used to send cash to Boyd Rice sometimes, just because I had it and figured it probably wasn't very easy making a living doing what he was doing. I liked the idea of dropping people some cash when they were doing amazing, cutting-edge work. Then he moved, so I had no one I wanted to send cash to anymore. Soon after I read up on LaVey and the Church of Satan. Pretty cool, very well thought out. So I sent them a hundred dollars, getting my card. I've never been an "active" member. I'd already went to the infamous 8-8-88 show (the 8-8-88 rally involved NOH, Radio Werewolf, The Church of Satan and Feral House, and has been described as the defining moment of 1980s Satanism - ed. note), and saw that CoS looked like a bunch of groupies, pathetic folks gushing about how they got a picture of themselves with Zeena, the same sort of mindless idolatry you find in every other idiot scene. I sent my money anyway, though, because the Doctor wrote inspiring, fascinating work.

You are also a member of the Tribe of the Wulfings, an Asatru kindred. As I believe your definition of Asatru goes far beyond "the religion of the Vikings", could you elaborate on what it means to you?

- Being at one with fate. As myth and spirituality, Asatru is not immune to the foibles of other religions, ancient or modern. Perhaps I should say, as anything to do with humans, Asatru is not immune from complete idiocy. Fools are just as fated as sages, and, really, when you get right down to it, there isn't a great deal of difference. As myth and spiritualism are inherent to it, Asatru attracts more than its fair share of lunatics and mindless, weak-willed fools looking to fill a void that has nothing to do with insight or self growth. But then, what really is important in life?

One thing that has always bothered me about some people into Asatru (and this applies to other forms of paganism as well) is that they emphasize its' outer trappings rather than its' essence, which sometimes gives it an utterly superficial and childish appearance. Dressing up "Viking style" or wielding a sword in a forest somewhere seems to me more like role-playing games than anything that has to do with genuine spirituality. Would you agree?

- Yeah, of course. The odian vs the odinic. Some people also go in the direction of academics yet still skim the mere surface, approaching Asatru as something outside themselves, just as much avoiding the spirit of it. It's like Manson said after a fellow Vacaville inmate lit him on fire because of a religious disagreement, "How far do you have to go until you see God?" I don't find godliness at a distance. I find that spirit living and breathing in everything.

You have included a couple of spoken-word tracks on Warcom Media compilations by James Mason, author of the revolutionary National Socialist tome Siegfried, and you have also interviewed him for an issue of The Warcom Gazette. What do you find of interest or value in his ideas, and what made you decide to eventually include him on your releases? Are you still in contact with him? What's he up to these days anyway? The last I read was that he has written two books heavily influenced by Christianity, UFO's and weird stuff like that.

- When he told Sharon Tate's mother on nationwide US radio that she lost her daughter the moment Sharon had hooked up with the Hollywood crowd and that Manson's folk simply freed her from her misery, well, who wouldn't want to work with James Mason? That cruel heartlessness took quick wit and big balls. I was fascinated by that. That interview of his on Bob Larsen's "Talk Back" made me want him doing something for Warcom Media.

From the time I was 13 I wondered why there were no terrorist organizations dedicated to killing Hollywood "stars." I was always annoyed with the kids in school having infatuations with Hollywood actors and actresses, with people who merely acted like other people. Acting, what a pathetic avocation. People had told me for years to read *Helter Skelter* but I never would,

MEDIA



figuring if so many people thought it fascinating, it had to be crap. When I finally did read the book, I was blown away. I ended up studying quite a bit on the Manson phenomenon and Manson himself. A very original thinker. There were quite a few ideas that corresponded with my way of thinking.

I haven't been in contact with James Mason for several years. I'm not sure what he's up to, but I hear, as you, that he's been writing bizarre Christian UFO plastic-bound texts.

I know that some people have been quite offended by Warcom. Just what do you think is it that makes you particularly offensive in this underground music scene, where there really aren't many taboos left to break? Could it be that people detect something real, some genuine content or depth in Warcom Media releases, that it's not done merely for shock as so many in this music scene are fond of doing?

- Well, I went into the extreme music underground with an in-your-face, fuck-the-world way that upset everyone who was trying to parasite a dollar off the fans they considered their suckers. A lot of people in this scene have BIG fucking egos. They think they're more special than anyone else. But me, I don't give a shit about that narcissistic lunacy. Few of these people have anything to offer, publicly or personally. Unlike most people, I don't mind saying it. Moreso, maybe I offend people because I'm open to talking, I'm open to dialogue. Very few people in this scene are interested in communicating honestly. And that just proves most of the people in this scene are poseurs with little to say and nothing authentic to their personalities. Mason Jones of Charnel Music used to argue with me. I dissed him pretty hard. But he spoke up, said what he thought, was honest to himself. I respect him for that. I'm not here to be agreed with. I just hope for people to develop themselves, their own points of view.

One thing I thought of when writing this interview was that you were one of the first to publicly attack World Serpent, years before the recent events with Death In June et al. What's your thoughts on the events that have transpired?

- I haven't followed what's gone on except what people have said. I don't know details of the recent events, the reasons for the departures from World Serpent. I was interested in them for positive reasons in the '80s, despised them for negative reasons in the '90s, and now they're insignificant to me. I honestly don't know how heavy-handed World Serpent was with Death In June and Sol Invictus, but WS was heavy-handed with WM and warned people off from having anything to do with me. So when WS acts refused to do interviews with any zine featuring my work, I don't know whether that was because WS told them not to or because the acts thought being seen in the same place as me wasn't a good idea. I don't know how weighted the decisions were. What I do know is that I haven't a clue why any "zine would even want to feature any WS artist. I've never read an interview with any of them that was even vaguely interesting, other than with Tibet

(David Tibet of Current 93 -ed. note).

"Plan 8 From Outer Space" was quite extreme and really bizarre. How has the public as well as the contributors themselves reacted to it?

- I haven't promoted it much, not aurally anyway. I'm less into kneerjerk public display now. Going after a reaction gets boring after awhile. Contributor reaction has been positive by the artists whose tracks I left intact. One called it the defining soundtrack of the 20th Century. And I think he was right. It's the most bizarre, cacophonous work with a few subtle gems beautifully interspersed. It has a bit of everything stylistically and reflects honestly the insanity of the defining issues of the past century. All its problems and concerns, depravity and enlightenment, destruction and growth. Unlike "Men among Mice" this disc actually has hits, between the horror and the hatred, the bizarreness, noise and dismay. Tracks that make you want to listen to it again. A few people, though, a couple of whom used to be close, haven't spoken to me since, probably because I demolished their tracks, or perhaps they had no idea the project was going to be quite as extreme or crazy as it turned out. That, and it took a long time for me to pull it all together. I think some people actually forgot they were going to be part of it. Since my reputation had only grown more menacing, I think some contributors were shocked to find themselves part of this disc.

You dedicated "Plan 8 From Outer Space" to Charles, who committed suicide some years ago. To give the readers some background, Charles used to run Sarote industries, a "right-wing avantgarde" outfit, as well as having his own musical projects, primarily Book and Sword, and Nationalsozialismus. Having heard and seen material by him, I can personally say that I was impressed by the originality, depth and presentation of the works. As I remember you were supposed to write about him in The Warcom Gazette but never did, could you tell me a little bit more about Charles and perhaps give us a personal recollection of Charles? Why did he commit suicide? As Storm will soon release a Book and Sword full-length CD, I'd like to know if you still have any unreleased material left that you plan to put out?

- He was cryptic, and for good reason, it later turned out. He was a member of US Special Forces at a time when they were cleaning house on anyone with questionable interests, tattoos, that sort of thing. The military was his life. His family is an army family and takes great pride in their military heritage. Apparently a superior was going to have him court-martialed for bogus, personal reasons and, after seven years of complete commitment and rapidly climbing up the ranks, including black ops and special high tech training, he chose to end it all. Two days after Christmas in '96, on holiday leave, he shot himself in the head.

Charles was one of the first people to contact Warcom Media and was very supportive and encouraging. He was going through similar things as I was, his work frightening off associates, that sort of

reaction. We hit it off well. I was going to interview him for the Gazette to coincide with the release of his 7", taking my time, figuring there was no rush to get it done. But that never happened. And, sadly, he never got to see any of his material released by me.

Toward the end he had a different tone. I actually wrote him asking if he was actually the same person, because he seemed so different. He wrote back saying that, yes, it was still him. But he'd obviously changed. His tone and demeanor were markedly different. And he was anxious for me to get the 7" and "Men among Mice" out as soon as possible. I would write back that there was no rush, that we were making good progress. I budgeted his 7" to follow "Men among Mice" and "Men among Mice" was nearly finished. Then at the last minute, just as I was about to have the disc manufactured, he wanted to change the artwork he'd sent, changes which I nixed, telling him it was too late, that his new graphics would be great for the 7". Which they were. I had no idea he was trying to esoterize the appearance of his interests, even having his tattoos covered, to save his military career. But it was too late. For everything. He said he'd be gone for the next month on business but would be home for Christmas. Said he was excited about the projects. And then I never heard from him again. He just disappeared.

I'd already hooked him and Storm up and, after a year or so of us wondering what happened to him, Michael (Moynihan) tracked down the information that he had killed himself. Then, with Michael's help, I contacted his widow, who I hadn't known before. She's the most wonderful woman. And she filled in the blanks. There were a lot of blanks. Charles had never even told us he was in the military, though from the way he'd disappear at times Michael suspected he was.

I gave my last unreleased Book and Sword track to Dan Ghetu in Romania. A track too long to fit on the 7". Ghetu was putting out what sounded like an amazing compilation focused on Codreanu and the Iron Guard, titled "Fidelis Legio." His comp turned out pretty good, but he ripped everyone off, completely dishonoring Charles, not even sending a copy for Charles' widow. She'd been the inspiration for me to send Ghetu the track in the first place, telling me how she'd encountered an elderly woman she'd never met before who, out of the blue, asked her about her loss and told her not to worry, that Charles was fighting alongside St. Michael. Ghetu is pathetic. He sold all his copies without fulfilling his promises to his contributors. He's filled with an abundance of reasonable excuses, though. Reasonable until you've heard them all ad nauseum from every contributor. Then you find that none of his excuses hold water.

Here's a trivia question. Me, Charles, Boyd Rice, Nikolas Schrek and Genesis P-Orridge were all in the same venue at the same time back in the '80s. I'll send whoever tells me the name of this venue any one item from my catalog for free.

"Calling Dr. Luv", on the track "Pack 44". How did you get acquainted with those guys? To what extent do you share their views and ideas, i.e. are you into Satanism? Also, I read in Conquer Now #IX that you chased down a guy who had pointed a gun on Thomas Thorn - could you tell us what happened?

- Acquainted through the usual routes of mutual associates and mutual affections for alcohol. I don't like to share, so I don't. No, I'm not into Satanism - dress code isn't strict enough. As for the celebrated gun incident...well, to make a long story short, yeah, what he said.

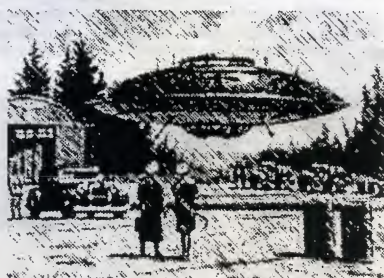
I'd like to ask you to elaborate on the concept of White Devil Conspiracy, especially the "white devil" part of it? The white devil thing seems to be a reference to what Malcolm X said, right? What does it mean to be a white devil?

- More correctly it is a reference to the practice of shedding one's "slave name" which was employed by the Nation Of Islam, at the time Malcolm X joined. As for what it means to be a White Devil, I think I explained it in Conquer Now. You'd be better off asking your local bean pie salesman about it—I'm sure they'd be happy to tell you.

As many others in this industrial-noise-neo-classic-electronic-experimental-whatever music scene, you explore/utilize themes, ideas and imagery of a fascist slant. Some of these bands that utilize the above mentioned things are quite ambivalent in their usage of such, whereas others do so in a blatant way just to shock or outrage, without any real content or depth in their approach. Your usage of these things seems to fall somewhere between or beyond these two approaches I mentioned above. I know this may be a tiring question, but would you care to comment?

- Do "Fascist" themes, ideas and imagery still shock and outrage people? If they do, what could I possibly have to gain from it? And what do I care anyway? Look, I utilize whatever imagery I use because it moves me, not because other people associate it with whatever transient outrage they need to muster to feel better about themselves. It seems like the question has nothing to do with imagery at all—if it did, it wouldn't be an issue. If the question is "Are you a fascist and just trying to hide it?" then my answer is "If I was, I'm doing a damn poor job of it."

I remember seeing an ad for your stuff years ago in Resistance Magazine. How have people from that movement reacted to your stuff, seeing as it isn't quite the simplistic oi-punk with a



Robert X.

Robert X. is a musician/noisician, writer, prankster and wrestling-enthusiast. He is also known as Robert X. Patriot, Robert X. Troplate, Robert X. Cruciate, Robert X. Communicate, Robert X. Troydanaryan and simply as BOB. Bob is the über-hep instigator of the White Devil Conspiracy, the harbinger of Swank and the Kultural Diktator of the New Wave Revolution. To use a silly analogy: if we go into the whole Jungian vibe according to which Hitler was possessed by a Wotan archetype, then, if such notions are to be believed, Bob is definitely possessed by a Loki archetype - so similar are their characteristics. It is difficult to adequately describe a man of such great complexity. Bob is, after all, the Man of the Century.

Robert X. once described himself thusly in comparison to other eurocentric music acts like Blood Axis or Allerseelen: "My work [...] is more inspired by the image of the armpit stain revealed by Ezra Pound when he gave a Fascist salute. Having always been a rather unstudious person, I draw mainly from my alcohol-inspired, sarcastic perceptions and various extreme mood swings. I tend to be more reflective of the drunken, off-key singing in the beer hall, boot-to-the-head, "hey, girle, dig my uniform," aesthetic, more than any explainawayable artistic pretense."

I first got into Robert X. via Warcom's "Men Among Mice" compilation, on which Bob's genius (and not mention his impeccable sense of style) is evident. Bob's tracks on this release are instant classics. One of the two tracks concerned is "Blade of Vengeance", described by an unidentified author of an Robert X. Patriot & The White Devil Conspiracy discography as a "straight forward group motivational tune, directly inspired by fashion conscious Italian and Romanian trends of the 1930's".

Utilizing minimalist, low-fi equipment (like his children's toys), Bob has put out countless hits ranging from the now-classic sing-along hymn (to a sniper) "Up on a Rooftop" to the bizarre atmospheric "Cobainacide" from the germanized version of Abba's "Fernando" titled "Otto" to the hilarious acoustic ballad "Freya Aswyn's Basement". Brilliant stuff indeed. And to top it off, Bob has one hell of a sense of humor, contrary to the dour dead-seriousness of so many in this music underground. With immortal titles like "Black Rape for a Jew Girl" and "I'm O.K., you're a Pig" you can't go wrong.

So, without further ramblings, I present to you this rare interview with The Man himself. And as Bob would say - get with it, or get wasted by it!

First off, enlighten the squares, who is Robert X.? The product of an ancient technology?
- Evidence seems to point to toward the inescapable fact

that I am the bastard son of a Nazi UFO.

A few basic questions: your releases used to bear the name Robert X. Patriot and The White Devil Conspiracy. The White Devil Conspiracy is now a separate entity, and you have dropped the "Patriot" part of your name - why?
- I suppose I don't feel very patriotic.

Besides your children's toys, what equipment do you use?

- I haven't used children's toys in quite a while. My kids have grown quite a bit since that time and there aren't many toys lying around since they themselves have questioned the utility of such things.

Most of what has been released was played on a circa 1991 Yamaha amateur keyboard and recorded on an analog 4 track with a severely burnt channel. Some of the effects come from a Lexicon Vortex used only at its most primal level, as instruction manuals make me inexplicably drowsy. By "Industrial" standards it is strictly "spear and blue body paint" technology.

Have you ever done live concerts or performances as Robert X.? If not, have you ever considered doing this? What would be the ideal setting for such an event?

- I think that the rallies (and even the trials) at Nuremberg put to a disco beat would probably most closely resemble the "look" I'd need to truly capture my work... especially if you were to replace the thousands of men with barely clad, nubile, young women. As for settings, nothing less than the finest silver would be acceptable. Most of my live performances have been spontaneous, unplanned events that leave no evidence, save for broken hearts and broken glass.

Your material has been described as "subtle as a jackboot stomp on your face". I on the other hand think your stuff is really esoteric, so esoteric in fact, that either you get it totally or, which seems more likely in most cases, you don't get it at all. How have people reacted to your stuff? Do you think that people generally "get" what you are about?

- I get it, and as often as possible. As for "people" getting what I am about, what you see is what you get. I am the "disco" in "disco". I am the "mon" in "mongoloid". I am the allfather of the avant-garde and your girlfriend calls me DaDa. As for jackboots, I am tired of these paralytic word association games that people insist on. If there is any type of footwear to be associated with me, it's not a boot, Jack.

The last issue of Conquer Now magazine was a "Man of the Century" issue that was completely devoted to you. How did this issue come about? And for those who don't know yet, what makes you the man of the century?

- The issue came about when Curtis X. Pletive, minister of the Neon Green Propaganda Bureau of the WDC decided, albeit drunkenly, to heed the cry of the people and put out a magazine dedicated to my eminence. As for what "makes" me Man of the Century: that's like asking what makes a King a King. Devo-Inity and Divinity, natch.

Describe the ideas and concepts behind New Wave Revolution.

- Very basically, it's the art of taking ideas and images from the past that are easily identifiable and using them as bait for unsuspecting individuals who you can then manipulate and exploit.

You did some spoken word on The Electric Hellfire Club's album

How did you become acquainted with Kultural Diktator Robert X, and eventually put out his stuff?

- Somebody sent me his address and said I should add him to my mailing list. I sent him a Gazette or two and he wrote back. One thing led to another and soon enough he was banging out hits on his children's toys, put to tape on a cheap recorder at home.

What's your opinion on Kurt Cobain knowing that he has been the subject of various things done by Warcom, for example a tribute cassette?

- I've skewered Cobain and his suicide, made light of it. The tribute cassette was celebrating his demise. It was stupid of me, because I did and still do like his sound. What can I say? I was feeling pretty rotten back then. There's no inherent contradiction or hypocrisy with what Nirvana was doing. Straight up rock and roll. The energy Steve Albini gave them with "Nevermind" was completely amazing. I almost wished I was in high school again, when that came out...

You released a tribute to the Formula-1 racing driver Ayrton Senna, who died during a race. What do you think of the Finnish F1 racing drivers?

- They're great... at interviews, anyway...

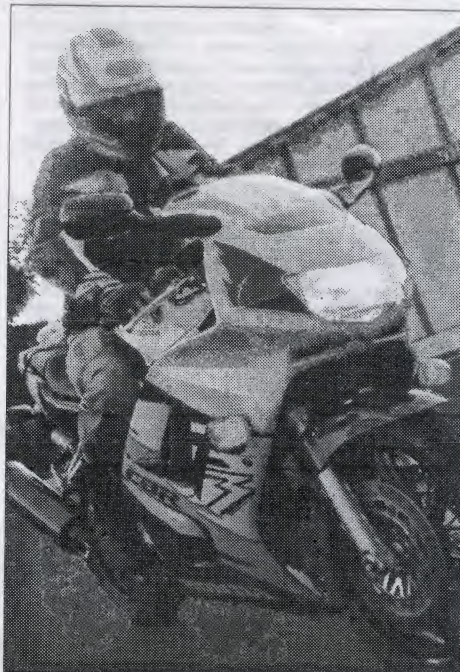
They're quite interesting. When Räikkönen lost to Schumaker in Magny-Cours this past July, it was brilliant. There he was at the post-race press conference, looking so incredibly abject yet numb. When he answered how he felt, it was completely Finn, completely perfect. There he was, his first F1 podium, a second place finish, very good result after a brilliant drive. The only reason he wasn't at the top of the podium was a patch of oil he hit, sliding him off-line, letting Schumaker past. Overall, a job very well done. And there he was, looking pissed, crushed, maybe a bit dead. He opened his mouth and said it was the worst race of his life! That was one of those great, dour F1 moments. Häkkinen used to give the most amazing interviews, too. Even better. After that shunt in Japan that almost killed him, he really seemed to get more inappropriate with that weird, uncomfortable, hesitating laugh of his. The idiot conducting post race interviews for the FIA back then used to ask the most asinine questions anyway, so it all came across bizarre, hilarious. I'm a Montoya fan, so...

World Rally is great. Grönholm and Rautianinen, driving Peugeot. I root for Subaru, so...

If I remember correctly, you mentioned to me that you have become somewhat tired of the underground music scene, and found some things of a more mainstream nature interesting. Could you expound?

- The mainstream surpasses the underground both in technique and in content. On all fronts, not just music. Sting's "Soul Cages" in '91 was far more Satanic than any underground artist's work. Listen to "All This Time" off that disc and tell me what I say isn't so. That same year U2 was making remarkable, adept use of noise on "Achtung Baby." Then you get Nine Inch Nails in '94

doing "Piggy" on their "Downward Spiral" disc, a homage to loss of control any Mansonite could appreciate. Shit, play Hole's "Northern Star" off "Celebrity Skin" for any underground 'zine reviewer and if they don't recognize Courtney Love's voice, I'm sure they'll masturbate themselves into a North European frenzy over this neo-folk paean to the Nordic way. Check out Eminem. Seriously amazing stuff. I got so tired of the blinders many people in the underground music scene put on, not even giving the



mainstream a listen simply because it's mainstream. There's bigotry for you!

Beyond music, the ubiquity of gore on The Discovery Channel and

The Learning Channel - surgeries, car crashes, building collapses, animal attacks, natural disasters. "South Park" frequently pushes the envelope of racial, religious and scatological tolerance. The Undertaker crucifying fellow WWF wrestlers on a runic cross they'd lower from the ceiling. Or 300+ lb WWF wrestler Mark Henry impregnating a little 70 year old former wrestler; she goes into premature labor and what do they pull out of her but a goey, dismembered human hand! Extreme wrestling with 20 foot falls, barb wire and plastic explosives. "Jackass." Might not be GG eating shit or Sotos getting off on the abuse of children, might not go as far as the early SPK videos or Graeme stuffing his mouth with randi raw sheep brain, might not be German shit porn or Japanese fake snuff films, but just about everything underground is now done much better, and frequently more intelligently, by mainstream artists utilizing mass media. Technological advances have easily sped up the commodification of extremism, anyway. The underground just isn't all the underground anymore. In my youth you really had to search things out. Now, extremism is more accessible than ever before. Communication technology has brought the mindblowing insanity of BME just a click away.

A few trivia questions to end this interview... Who is the little girl who does the vocals on the track "Aryan Robotic Dance"?

- Sorry, I can't say! I'm sworn to secrecy.

What's your favorite booze?

- Single Malt scotches. Oh, and last Yule Robert X sent me a recipe for New Wave Eggnog. Absolutely delicious.

What are your future plans with Warcom Media? When will you issue a full-length CD by Warcom?

- I'm going through some changes right now, so it's hard to say when I'll release a Warcom CD or what I'll do with the label in the future. I might phase it out. It's a company born from reaction. I find it too limiting. But I might be able to work within it's confines and expand it beyond its limitations. I'll decide soon.

Last words are yours.

Everyone can be an asshole, just like me. Get over it and get on with it. Become your own star. You ARE a star. Nous sommes du soleil.

P.S. Warcom Media is no more. If you wish to contact Beau, the address and email are still in use.

WARCOM MEDIA - PO BOX 1175, San Jose CA 95108, USA.
WARCOMEDIA@aol.com

Selected releases by Warcom and Robert X. are available via The Den of Iniquity (<http://www.diaboli.com>) and Strength Through Joy Productions (<http://members.aol.com/newwave93/>).

DISCOGRAPHY:

RELEASES AS ROBERT X. PATRIOT AND THE WHITE DEVIL CONSPIRACY

Feel The Harm - (cassette) 1994 Warcom Media.

Cast The Lead Ballot - (cassette) 1994 Warcom Media.

Black Rape For A Jew Girl - (cassette) 1995 Warcom Media.

Principis Sardonica - (white vinyl 7") 1996 Warcom Media.

Ethnic Cleansing - (cassette) 1996 Warcom Media.

Listen To The Harm - (cassette) 1997 Warcom Media.

I'm O.K., You're A Pig - (cassette) 1998 Warcom Media.

How To Succeed Against Business - (split vinyl 7" with Volupsa) 1999 Ajna Offensive.

A New Wave Of Jazz For Haters - (4 track CD-R limited to 23 copies, released with Conquer Now! IX magazine) 2000 First Stone Publications / Warcom.

COMPILATION TRACKS

"Blade Of Vengeance" - Men Among Mice - Warcom Media.

"Dig It Up" - Fuck Off... We Murder - Soffitta Macabre.

"A Night To Remember" - How Terrorists Kill - StateArt.

"St. Stephen's Song" - Psychic Wolves Ov Midgård - Strength Through Joy Prod.

RELEASES AS WHITE DEVIL CONSPIRACY (ONLY)

The White Devil Conspiracy offers you Gestalt & Battery - The ultra-violence special edition ltd.100. w/ Elektro-Cross patch and badge. 12 page booklet. CD packaged in a White Devil DVD Case. 2002 Strength Through Joy Productions.

RELEASES WITHOUT WDC

"Guyana Sunrise" - Jonestown Revolution - 2001 Warcom Media.

DOGS LEG RISING - (CD-R) 2001 Warcom Media (as RX).

MISCELLANEOUS

"Pack 44" - Calling Dr. Luv - The Electric Hellfire Club.

CONQUER NOW! Magazine issue IX (Man of the Century: Robert X. special issue) - 2000 First Stone Publications.



message that they are promoting, but a lot more bizarre than that? I imagine that some purists might even consider it "entartete musik"...

- That's funny. I don't remember any such ad and I wasn't aware that there was a "movement" from which I could draw people to react to my recordings. Purists? Of what, precisely? Of a musical genre whose most-beloved band (Skrewdriver) played blues riffs in songs like "Boots and Braces" and had no problem reconciling the apparent contradiction?

My personal ideology has always been in a constant state of evolution. I find it difficult to adhere to any label that was used by a bunch of cats 70 years ago who were basically making it up as they went along. All successful political/social movements throughout history have been based on the here and now, not the there and then.

Given that on your latest CD-R "Dogs Leg Rising" you are making fun of, or in some bizarre way giving homage to underground luminaries like Death In June, Current 93, NON, Freya Aswynn, Michael Moynihan and Tony Wakeford - do you know of any one of these people have heard your stuff, and in such case, how have they reacted to it?

- I have no idea who any of those people are, and if they are violating copyright laws and stealing from my body of work, then I'd like to know about it.

What, if anything, became of Blood Conspiracy, which I understood was a collaboration between yourself, Beau and Michael Moynihan?

- I know nothing of any such conspiracy, nor have I heard of the Moynihan Brothers.

You mentioned putting out an album by O-Phase - who is he (or they)?

- If I knew, I'd probably be inclined to decline and then recline with a beer stein. The less I know, the better I feel. O-Phase is simply another arm (or leg, or wing, if you prefer) of the New Wave Revolution.

You have an internet-radio station called New Wave Revolution (mp3.com/stations/newwaverevolution). As the music on the station ranges quite a lot in style (and this applies to your own stuff as well), I'd like to know what you think makes music suitable for New Wave Revolution?

- I don't think. I make soundtracks for world domination and the ultimate devolution. The revolution will be televised, it will have a funky, funky beat, and cheese and crackers will be served. I am one of those crackers.

Could you give me some examples of "lowlights" of your career (as opposed to highlights)? You mentioned missing radio-interviews because of getting off the train at the wrong station, working for Shaun Partridge etc.?

- The secret to making a good omelette is in making sure that the pan is the right temperature. You don't want your eggs to sit on a cold pan - this causes the omelette to be runny. The key here is patience: let the pan heat up so that a drop of water sizzles and dances on it. THEN put your egg/milk mixture on, followed by your ingredients shortly thereafter. I prefer french ham and swiss cheese.

I know you are a Kultural Diktator, but if you were an actual dictator, how would society be ordered?

- What do you mean "if I was an actual Dictator"?

Who would you currently wish for to be put up against the wall?

- Long-haired white trash guys who always want to bum smokes off me. The ones who walk around or ride bikes because they lost their licenses after their 3rd DUI.

Guns, ties, sunglasses, knives, shining boots and proud salutes - what other clothing and accessories would you recommend for the fashionable fascist? I take it that you think these things are important since you have a shop up on the internet where people can buy Robert X. shirts, caps, beer mugs etc. (New Wave Revolutionary Outfitters - "The official supply depot for uberhep Vanguard of the glorious New Wave Revolution", cafeexpress.com/newwave).

- Man, if you have to ask, Charlie Brown-Shoes, then there's nothing I can do to help you and there's no store you can go purchase swank at. Personally, pocket hanks, tie clips, cufflinks...when you're deep in crime or making time, it's all about accessories.

What kind of hairdo do you have these days? In the photo I was going to use with this interview (from the Men Among Mice Cd-booklet) you look a little bit like Tintin.

- Hmmm...questions about personal grooming habits? Why don't you just check your latest surveillance photo and stuff cut and paste it into your dossier? Why this sudden interest in how I do my hair?

I've understood you are good at giving out drink-recipes; Beau mentioned the New Wave eggnog recipe you gave him, not to mention the ones that appeared in Conquer Now IX. Could you give us one or two new ones?

- It's not so much a question of giving out recipes as it is just being honest when my friends give a liquid holler and ask "what in the Hell was in that?" These are drinks handed down from generation to generation via the oral tradition of throwing up into a bucket on the floor of your friend's van. Here's a new one for ya:

Neon Green Death

Pour two shots of Midori, 1 shot of absinthe into a tall, sugar-rimmed glass with 3 ice cubes. Fill with grapefruit soda, add lime wedge. Float teaspoon of absinthe on top, set afire and drink.

What are your own current favourites in the realms of music, booze etc.?

- Booze: McCallens 18 year Old Scotch, 1993 Dom Perignon.

Music: Senor Coconut

Etc. The American English spelling of "favorite."

Could you explain what you think makes wrestling so magical?

- More people watch wrestling than vote, but people still swear by the magic of democracy. At least wrestling makes no bones about having a pre-determined outcome and ultimately, everybody wins.

What are the future plans of Robert X.?

- Plans 9 and 10 will be next.

Any last words or messages you wish to leave to the readers?

- Mmmmm. Zesty.

Robert X.: artists.mp3.com/artists/397/robert_x.html

New Wave Revolution: mp3.com/stations/newwaverevolution

New Wave Revolutionary Outfitters: www.cafeexpress.com/newwave

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SICKNESS

When I first heard of Sickness, the first thing that I thought about was the name. Why such a name, which I've seen already a handful of bands using. Does it have a personal meaning?

- Sickness was something that started off more as an abbreviation of sorts. It was more of a symbol (like how its done with the dots under it on the Ground Fault CD). But I chose the name for several reasons. The first being that I have been in and out of doctors (of various kinds) offices for most of my life. The first week I was alive they brought me back to the hospital with a 104.5 temperature, and I guess it started there. I have seen a lot of time, money, and resource dedicated to disease over the years. Spent time as a subject in tests and treatments so sickness in general has effected my life, shaped it, and affected how I see things. Other reasons for the name is that sickness, disease, plague, etc have shaped the world we live in more so than any social, political or economic force. Billions of dollars in research, thousands of subjects, numerous companies are dedicated to the banishment of this disease or that abnormality. Disease in an industry in an of itself, companies make cures, partial treatments, "relief" etc and package it. Disease is a business. Sickness limits our lives, changes lifestyles and social habits. Sickness over history has wiped out civilizations. Ended the most powerful of campaigns, and changed the course of history. It creeps into all parts of life more so than a lot of the culture. Sickness mutates on its own its in constant evolution (as is my music). Its in constant progress and has a drive unlike a lot of things in nature. Lastly, it is one of my favorite subjects. Decay, rot, etc. Everything eventually dies of it. Natural causes is simply the slow sickening rot of the body. The wear and tear brought on by living. Sickness is also something that can be very personal. Your own personal malady. Disfunction. Problems. A lot of the times people make their own disease to live and die by. My music is always personal. Themed. Researched. Thought over and constructed. I saw a lot of similar themes and sickness is an ongoing interest. I know there are many other metal and hardcore bands that use the name, some as recent as last month that pop up and use the name. There were even punk bands in the 70s. As I see it I was here before and I will more than likely be here afterwards.

I don't think Sickness is a very old band. Did you have involvement in noise before this?

- Sickness has been around since 1986. My first tapes were released in small bunches at that point to people. I had started out in a hardcore band called (oddly enough) Social Disease. The fellow band members wanted to talk more about the music than do it and I wanted to add some stranger things into the 3 chord progressions they wanted to do. So I started my own solo project called Sickness. I built my own early equipment: distortion pedals, tape loop machines, etc. I used to record using the old Les Paul method of recording by taking one recorded track and linking it up to another tape deck while doing new music on top. The more I layered the more the sound decayed, became muddy and less distinct. I used what I had at the time found sound, feedback, loops, and vocals. I had no real idea if there was any kind of interest in this music. I had heard TG, NON, Coil, Nurse with Wound, Whitehouse, and some early Merzbow, but I had no idea of how or what to do. I made tapes for the people I knew, never did any shows, just a basement recording process. When I had time, resource or an idea I wanted to explore I would record. The tapes were few and far between. I didn't do any major mailing/promotion until well after all of this. I had no real outlet, and I didn't see any point releasing tape after tape to no one or the same people simply because I could. I had been to RRR but Ron was uninterested in my early material (and I don't blame him) so I had no real drive until I did a couple shows in 1994 with other musicians. It was mostly improv noise by people into more experimental music, but it gave me some new ideas, and opened up new territory.

I did some more releases on tape but the next big step for me was a CDr burner. This was the first large distribution I did and what most people see as my first "official" release "No One Cries for the Death of a Disease" self released on my label. I mailed that to everyone I could think of or get to. I was able to find a larger audience and get the material out to them at that point. I

was out of school by then, working, and I had the resources and money to move my music to a larger place. I did what ever shows I could, whatever I could make it to, and keep working on my music. I think the live shows are what made the difference early on. Playing out go people more exposure but only in a localized area. The rest is through contact with the noise community at large.

You said you didn't see a point in releasing a tape after tape to no one or the same people. When you are doing research on the subject or recording the thing, do you already consider the format, what people it'll reach etc? In other words, do you do releases "on demand" or just create something and release it someday if at all? Do you have material laying

around, just waiting to be published some day?

- I am constantly working on music. I spend a lot of my free to working, editing, and mastering the music I need to do. As I said I constantly work on progressing my sound so I am making tracks all the time for releases, and I usually have a few projects lined up so that once I am done with one I have something else to move on to. Since it takes me so long to work on a track I don't really get ahead of myself but I do work on a variety of projects sometimes. I look for the subject first when looking at a record. Something that will focus my interest, something that has occupied my thoughts or that I have found interest in (enough interest to express it in sound). I try and put the same effort into each release no matter who it will reach or how many copies will be made. I think people who enjoy my music enjoy the fact that there is a level of quality and sound that they can expect from my music. I don't want to hack something out simply to do a release. I have to be happy with the work to release it, and my standards are high. I work in formats that I can rely on. CDr, CD, or LP because I get the best results from those mediums. They reproduce what I do well. I don't work that much with tapes because I don't think the recorded result is always the same on tape, and quality varies too much for my standards. I will work on a track or record basic source material while waiting for projects to work on, but for the most part everything is recorded for the label and with that specific release in mind. I have material that is unreleased and that will stay that way because I no longer feel it works with anything else or I was unhappy with the results. That material will just remain unused. It happens and not everything I work on turns out the way I want to which is just a fact of life.

It sounds like you also use a computer in making your noise amazingly loud. However, you do live performances without a computer. Does this make live shows different from studio work?

- I use a computer only to master the material (cleanup, eq, stereo spread and volume - mostly keeping it from over clipping). Production is part of recording like anything else. A good recording can become great if you know what you are doing. The loudness comes from how I record and the layers I used. I have a pretty professional home setup and

I have done a lot of research of getting the gear that will best work with my style or recording/music. All the music is recorded into a multi track and then cut up there so its the same as playing live except I have infinitely more control after with the recording process. Over the years I have paid very close attention to how I make sound in the studio and what I could use to translate that into a live situation and I think it comes extremely close. The hard part is getting it as clean and as forceful as my studio work, and doing a live show cuts down on the amount of equipment I use so I make short cuts where I can. I use a sampler for loops (live) because it cuts down on space and has its own effects. All the noise however is still done the way I work in the studio so not much is truly different about that. The only real difference in these two mediums is that the amount of changes and sounds present in a studio recording will be more than live. Live you get to feel it happen, and I attempt to make it an intense live performance. I get more enjoyment out of controlling the sound live than I do in the studio. I am perfectionist in the studio and given the time I can have there I can push things harder.

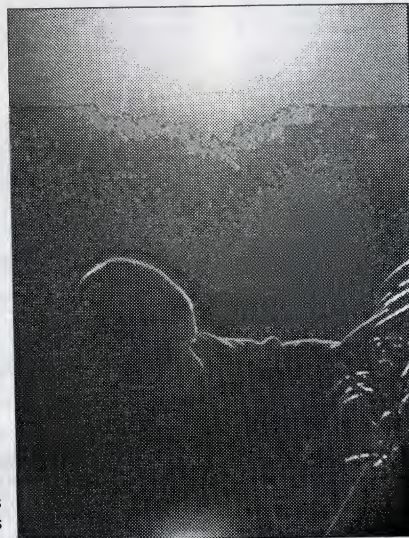
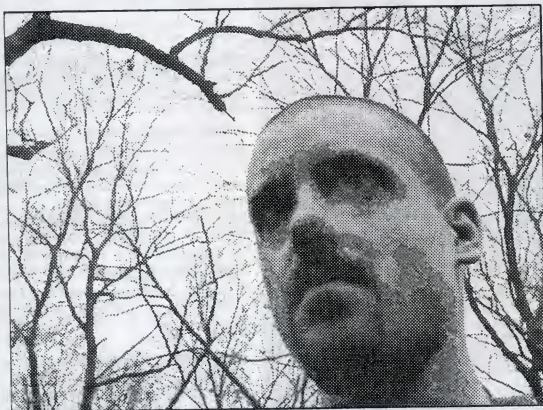
I think you have done design works for some other artists and most of your own material is released with full color covers. How much weight do you put on the visual side? Do live shows have anything related to that? Do you have interest in video projection, flyers, performance,?

- I don't emphasize much of the physical/visual side of things because I like a balance of both in any release. However if I think that full color, packaging, pictures, etc will help move the theme or add to the release I am willing to do the extra work. Also I think if someone is spending their hard earned cash on my release I want them to have a well done, professional looking package that matches the sound. I want them to get something worth the money. It doesn't have to be expensive to be good but there are a lot of labels out there that hack something together and it doesn't do the artist or the customer any justice. The extra money put into the release makes a bigger difference than people think. I am a graphic designer so I try and add some of my career into my music. Its another way of making the release personal. I have videos that I have made for background projection but I haven't used them because most venues don't have the projectors I need or aren't set up for any kind of projection. I would like to work with video to add to my live performances or work with someone that would strictly do video. My performance in London had video that was supplied by Rictive and it added a lot to the performance, and took its focus off of me and put it more on the sound.

I remember an internet messageboard message where you kind of "defend" your participation to the Pornography Hurts compilation by saying that all tracks (I assume including Sickness) are not misogynist or the usual power electronics approach to the theme. What's your view on pornography and does it have any influence on the work of Sickness?

- The noise scene has an issue about everything. I have my own issues about the noise scene. I just don't like when uninformed individuals jump on something assuming its the way it seems at first glance. I get a lot of this in my work. People just don't look for very long at anything in the genre. Nothing more than a first listen in a review, nothing more than a glance at a title or album cover. This person saw the title, saw who released it, and saw the bands listed and jumped immediately to a conclusion that was incorrect. I did see a lot of bands that have used shock, and so called extremity to get their work noticed. The artists on this comp have been around for a while and I think they have learned that plugging away in the same hole/idea isn't the way to do anything. I agree with something Slogun said about "extreme music" its that you shouldn't be shocked over something that happens in this genre. I agree the music is "extreme" and can be attached all kinds of ideas. However just because you can say the word cunt, nigger, bitch, fuck, nazi, etc doesn't mean that its extreme at all. Its just a word. People allow these words to have power over them, too much at times, and that leads to problems. People

who use these words simply because they can or to provoke someone are using whatever they can to gain a little bit of power (most of the time) Its exercising what little control they have. Until something moves into action it just a word and when it becomes that action people have to realize that sometimes a price has to be paid. Someones views are



simply that. Someone else's views. If they want to limit themselves through whatever means they get to pay for it. People need to be more intelligent about these issues. To get back the subject: Porn has its place in Sickness. It can become and obsessive disease just like a lot of other personal attachments can. I find that pornography has its place on both sides of the argument. That the victim is harder to see in pornography than people think it is. Its never so cut and dry. I think the power struggle in sex and sex related material is one of my biggest interests. To see what people are willing to use, get or justify for sex. The standards and morals and the effects they have. This is where my interest is - deciding where the victim really is.

Sickness creates something we can call "harsh noise". Do you create other form of noise/sound, and are you ever going to include such elements in Sickness or remain as "extreme" as possible sound wise?

- I have a side project called Omei that deals in the ambient side of things. With Sickness I will use any element I can to move or flow the music. I prefer cut up sound so that is the style I like to stick with but I have used ambient elements in songs as well. I will continue to make music that effects the body and the mind, and to me, the more extreme frequencies work better. I will never limit myself in the use of anything if it will help my music. I don't want Sickness to be something that is stagnant. Sickness will evolve as my tastes do so I don't want to count anything out.

Probably thanks to harshnoise.com website, I have begun to have a feeling that especially in the U.S., many harsh noisers are giving a lot of weight for the gear they use. How important is the equipment you have for your creation process? Does the original sound source or planned idea/structure have a role? Or more or less just planning what gear to use and the sound comes from them?

- The equipment is only as important as how you use it. If it works in my setup and achieves the ends I want I will use it. I do a lot of research on my equipment. I need to find out what it can do, what it responds to and what it will work with to determine what it will do with my setup and sound. The music industry doesn't make many pieces with noise or power electronics in mind so you have to be careful what you get. I don't know anyone that has money to throw away, even with the amount of gear I do purchase it has to work in someway with what I have and what I want to sound like. I don't go out and get something because artist A or B does. I think this leads to clones and sounds that are extremely similar at times. I don't post reviews to any of these equipment sites. I don't like people picking apart my gear. Its not important, its not really creative, and its counterproductive a lot of the times. The problem is that even if I gave someone all my equipment to use to make a song it wouldn't sound like Sickness. Similar elements, probably but its all in the approach of each person. Each person needs to find their own sound.

There needs to be a progression from a basic idea to something they want to do. Something that sets the sound apart from other artists. It could be planning, sound sources, gear or whatever they use. It is all an interaction of sound, equipment and the user. The user is the most important element.

Is there any gear you avoid, just because of it's popularity, or ability to make almost everybody sound the same (For example the most popular analog synth that basically makes "German style power electronics" when you push a button)?

- You mean an MS-20....

I am a gear collector. A lot of the fun I have is doing research on gear and finding new equipment. No I don't avoid anything that I can use, but I do seek out equipment that can hasn't been overused. Equipment becomes popular in phases once someone finds out that artist X or Y uses it. Most of the time I stop using something or relearn it so that I can do something completely different with that piece of equipment. A lot of the people I have seen use their gear learn the basics - the simple elements. The very top level, simple button turning, ideas so it is easy to take a piece further and make it sound different than those using similar pieces. It is once again not about what you have but how you use it, how you apply it, and how much you understand it.

Does the process of creation in general have importance or just the satisfaction of the final result?

- I think its both. Creating it leads to the final result. Better source material, and a good start can lead to a focused and better end. There needs to be a focused effort from point A to finish point B, some sort of progression or process.... Very little of the moment you make your music makes it to the listener on a record, in my opinion, so the end result needs to be something that was more than the original creative urge. I don't think many noise creations put down in one shot as a finished product stand up after one listen. They might have interesting parts and live it might sound amazing

because the listener is there, part of it and can feel the effect of the sound. But outside the live situation I have to make the music into what I want it to sound like. I need to focus it in a direction so that in the end the final result is what I think will last. The end is as close to how I pictured the sound all along as I can get.

Some artists create under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Do those things have a role in Sickness?

- No. I need a lot of focus and concentration to work in the studio. The music I make comes from a personal space inside me. I don't think any drug would help me reach that place better than I know myself. I might have a couple of beers before a show to loosen up before a live performance or to hang out with friends of mine who are there but drugs and alcohol don't play a part in the creation of the sound.

I consider your CD on Ground Fault as one of the strongest harsh noise CDs from the U.S. during recent years. Was this CD special for you, or just a release among others? As I must say I have most likely missed many Sickness releases, I can't get full view of what your sound always is.

- Thanks. I think it had to be for me. After recording the Ground Fault disk I spent a lot of time trying to decide what to do next. I had put everything into that recording, and I felt drained even a month after I had finished mastering it. Each release is special or that is my attempt, and that is why I take so long with each of them. I think a lot of noise artists see the next release as just another. I only release a CD or so a year a long with some comp tracks. It takes several weeks for me to hammer something into what I want it to be. This was my first "real" CD release which to me meant added exposure for the music I work hard at, it meant someone was going to put money behind the release, and this was the first look a lot of people in the genre would get at Sickness. With all these things behind me I pushed harder on this release than any other. I wanted it to stand apart from my other releases and the releases of other artists. I wanted to make a point of standard and quality when someone puts all their effort into a release. I wanted to back up what I had been saying all along about quality. I think I succeeded. The music is there to speak for itself.

How do you see the current state of noise? Do you buy a lot of new stuff or follow what is happening?

- I see it as I saw it before. There is a lot of growth (but the genre remains small) as in the number of people, but less and less in real quality each time. People look to noise for freedom but a lot of the time the freedom means that they don't have to put any effort or strive for quality. I don't buy a lot of new releases. I don't have room for all the CDs and CDR's people want to send. If I hear about an interesting artist or release I will get it. I just see a lot of artists who want to do something with their work but aren't about to put the work into. No research, no ideas. They just want the info. They just want the answers and to me that isn't the way to do something. I try and follow what is going on. Most of what I have access to is the internet boards and post. Some e-mail contact with friends. Not that much. I have some input into what Self Abuse releases at times since Pat and I are friends so I am constantly looking for something that stands out.

Can you tell us something about VD?

- Besides the fact that its a nasty genre of disease. VD is a collaboration between myself and Taint. It allows me a freedom to do a lot of things, and has the end result of getting Taint's perspective into what I am doing. Its more of a straight forward power electronics project. It combines both of our interests into one project. It started when I gave Taint material to remix and remake a track called "Pig" for the Sought for Slaying box set. I liked the outcome and we traded off source material and worked on it. I think it sounds very different from traditional p.e. or either of our projects. The sounds compliment each other well, and the results are much different at times then I think I could do as Sickness which is interesting to me. The first disk was my favorite release on Ninth Circle, and one of the last big projects I did for my label. We continue to do work when we can.

How is your label Ninth Circle doing?

- Ninth Circle is pretty dead. I don't have much time or resource anymore to do any other releases other than my own. The Omei 3" CDR that came with the Ground Fault "special edition" was the first thing I had done in a very long time. I also helped release the latest VD CDR with another label, Cathartic Process. I still plan on releasing music but I have little time to do so. I understand that running a label is hard work, and demands a lot of time from the person who runs it. Right now making the music is my focus and Ninth Circle will be for private releases and special projects.

Many people talk about noise and power electronics as almost opposite styles. Many feel that noise without message/content is useless. Often it seems that many of those who created a record with "content", still have nothing more to say than pure noisers. They just insert a pornographic or political picture to the cover. You have participated on compilations with power electronics bands (like Pornography Hurts), etc. How do you feel about this?

- I see similar elements in both styles and of course the obvious differences. I think that content, direction, structure, and process allow the music to have additional elements in it that a straight noise recording doesn't/can't. I get more enjoyment and will listen to a release that I can look at more than as music. People who just use the idea of content by slapping on porn or politicals aren't really doing that much. Each song, each CD of mine starts out with an idea. I attempt to focus each idea into a song by title, samples, etc. Each piece has something people can go deeper with. Move beyond the sound if they want to. I think that bands that do their research on their subjects and write the lyrics in p.e. such as Deathpile, Grunt, Taint, Slogun, Control, etc. are exploring their own interests. They are giving the listener their view point on an interest or subject, taking it beyond the music or the idea. If you are screaming "BITCH BITCH BITCH I'LL KILL YOU KILL YOU" into a microphone for people to hear you better have some other meaning behind it. No one cares if your girlfriend/boyfriend dumped you and you are venting. No one cares if you hate the world because there you are plastering your pain out for everyone

to see. You must want attention at that point. The better bands know how to focus the release. I am looking for something more than just the sound/or raw uncensored emotion when I look for something to listen to. I am looking for a dynamic to focus it for me and I will do better work when focused. I like a solid combination of sound and content from an artist. It makes me more interested in their work, or in my own. You can tell when someone has done their research

and done their work.

You have been planning to come to do a European tour. Do you have any expectations for Europe and do you have many contacts over here?

- I would hope to expand my live show for the events that are suppose to happen in Europe. I have played in London, so I have idea of what to expect. I know the scene is small on a global scale, and that turn outs at shows aren't really large unless its a big festival style event. Or for more diverse shows. I enjoy traveling so this is a good combination of vacation and performing for me. I hope to play a few decent shows and have them go well. Get more exposure for my music. That is about it. I am trying to keep an open mind about it. I don't have many contacts in Europe. The people I know are other performers and people who have released my music. I am planning on going over with Taint, and he has more European contacts than I do.

Last words?

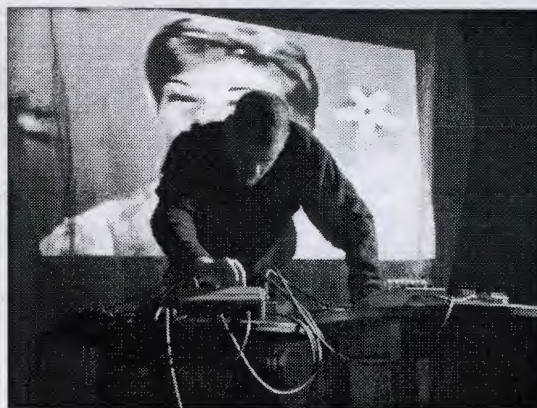
- Listen. Learn. Don't except people who work hard at their music to dumb it down for you to make your own.

Thanks

Chris

SICKNESS

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Isomer may at this point in time be a relatively new name, but the fact remains that sole member David Tonkin is producing some damn solid dark ambient/heavy electronics music, which is an almost a non-existent style and/or scene within the Australian musical landscape. Regardless, Isomer managed to garner the attention of premier Deutsch label Tesco Organisation, who have released his debut CD "Serpent Age" (reviewed elsewhere in these pages). Following on with this interview, David provided some interesting insight.



Given that Isomer is quite a new project it may not be known by many who read this interview. Nonetheless please introduce yourself, the project and the musical path you traversed that lead to what Isomer has become today?

- Initially I just needed to focus my energies and frustrations into something creative. Other than basic piano as a kid, I never took any formal musical training. I came into dark ambient/noise/pe/whatever music through a couple of CMI and Dorobo releases, and they sort of inspired me to explore for myself those sorts of textures. I bought a second-hand Akai S2000 sampler and basic MIDI keyboard, found a couple of PC programs and had a go. That was around the year 2000. The results were pretty hit-and-miss, but they served their purpose, giving me some sort of release, and I had fun doing it. Basically whatever came out I put down on tape, however shitty it sounded. It varied from light-hearted novelty pieces to noise to dark ambient and death industrial. "Serpent Age" is much more focussed in intent and sound, and I put more effort into making it a complete package.

When you first started releasing material in the ambient/industrial genres it was done so under your own name. It was not until later that you took the project name of Isomer. Why the shift in focus to entity away from you as an individual?

- I just found I was sitting on a number of tracks with no moniker to use in distributing "Semblance of Perfection", so I used my own name. I guess also I wasn't really concerned with creating a recognisable mark or image. By the time I had put together the tracks for "Sedation", I had found the definition of an isomer was analogous to the sorts of ideas I was exploring, so started to use that.

Given that your early tapes were rather eclectic in scope, it was not until you recorded your debut CD that Isomer gained a clear focus and direction. Obviously this was a conscious effort, but what made you focus your sound towards a dark ambient/heavy electronics fusion?

- On a basic level, it was partly a result of the programs I was using. Until then I had only been using the S2000, a demo version of Fruity Loops and Audio Mulch. When I got my hands on a full version of Fruity Loops (with you and a couple of others) I had access to a much wider variety of sounds, generators and effects, the sampler took a back seat and I let fly on the PC. I guess it also reflected a change in attitude and approach on my part. I'd gained more confidence in what I was doing, and took the production of "Serpent Age" much more seriously.

Can we expect drastic stylistic changes to Isomer's direction and sound in future?

- I've been drawn to more noisy material lately, so I imagine that will filter through pretty soon. Some vocal treatments maybe?

In the review of your debut CD I made a comment regarding the track title "Every Man a Star" implying that it could be said that some shine more brightly than others. What is your view of this perception, or is the track title to be taken in a more literal manner? (with regard to the theory that all life has been derived from exploded star matter).

- It's a reference to personal strength and energy; that fundamentally you can really only rely on yourself and your own reserves. "Be a light unto yourself". You can always look to religion, philosophies and other people for guidance and inspiration, but first and foremost strength must come from within. But yeah, I'd agree that some definitely do shine more brightly than others!!

Likewise the first track "Star of Sarajevo" may imply an interest in matters surrounding the conflicts within a particular region of Eastern Europe. Is this at all the case?

- My wife is a Bosnian Serb from Sarajevo who migrated out here to Australia with her family in '93 after being forced from home. I've developed a great respect for the generosity, honour and integrity of the Serbs since then, and the track's an homage to them. Of all the peoples of the Balkans and of Europe at large since WW2, I don't think any have been demonised and ostracised to the extent the Serbs have, largely as a result of the work of public relations firms, the rivers of shit

that came from the US and NATO, and the complicity and involvement of the Western media. So much of what filtered through to us was and still is tainted, and "Star of Sarajevo" is a personal response to that.

Additionally, as many of the track titles refer to the sun and the cosmos and with the album artwork particularly reflecting this, I assume that there is a concept behind the whole album? (if not simply a common theme between tracks). Please comment.

- I was very much focussing on my resolve and personal strength though the whole process, and I think the sun and its associated imagery and symbols are a powerful representation of these ideas. Together they gelled into the overall "concept" for the album, and I chose the final cover images accordingly. The demo cover featured a seal of the sun over some treated surgery photos (from an incredible book depicting invasive operations called "The Sacred Heart"). For the Tesco release the seal is featured on the back cover, the front cover has an image of the sun itself with a massive solar flare belching from it, and the CD and undertray feature a lion-headed serpent which appears in Roman, Egyptian and early Christian mythology.

Given that "Serpent Age" was officially released in late 2002, what has the response been to it thus far?

- The response has been encouraging so far - it's been getting some positive reviews and feedback. Manifold Records described it as "the heaviest and most important blast of ambient music to emerge from Australia since Alan Lamb's wire music". There's been some media interest in print and on radio from overseas and in Australia, and Rui Carvalheira from Dagaz Music in Portugal asked me to put together a sound piece for his website (www.dagaz-music.com). Still, it seems some distro labels are a little reluctant to buy a CD from an unknown Australian act, regardless of the fact that Tesco picked it up.

In hindsight is there anything you would have liked to change with the musical content of the "Serpent Age"?

- Overall I'm happy with the results, although I probably should have showed more restraint with the length of one or two of the tracks - they're pretty self-indulgent. The additional compression done during the mastering of "Body Language" was maybe a bit overdone as well, but generally I'm satisfied with the music itself. It's in the can - time to move on!

I believe that you produce most of your material using modern computer methods, of which this has come under fire from some post-industrial artists who believe that the use of a PC to create such music is not a positive thing. What is your view on this matter?

- I really don't think it matters how you produce it. It might not sound as "warm" as analogue, but in the end it's the results that matter. There's no ideological reasoning or intent behind my use of a computer. Actually it's partly born of necessity - it's a cheaper alternative for me, as I already had a PC at the time I chose to start toying with sounds. I do sometimes wish I had a rack of knobs or peddles to fiddle around with - something more tactile than the click of a mouse button - but I'm happy enough with what I'm using at the moment, and the results they produce. Certainly in the future I'd like to broaden my pallet a bit.

Do you find composition of tracks difficult? Also prior to commencing a track do you have a clear idea of what you want to achieve or do the tracks tend to evolve on their own accord as you progress through to completion?

- Often I find if I encounter difficulties in the initial stages of assembling a track, I probably shouldn't be forcing it. Sometimes an idea or concept will inspire me to manifest it somehow, but more often than not I just start from a particular sound or sample which I'm taken by, and everything else coalesces around it.

Given that you are now part of a minute (but at least growing) Australian scene how do you view this in its international context? Likewise are there other Australian projects that you have networked with that you would like to mention?

- As you yourself would know, it can be a lonely path to tread, but I agree the "scene" does seem to be growing. Two projects I'm really impressed by at the moment are Terra Sancta and Vespertine (at least his album "Transmissions from Antiworld"). New label Cranial Fracture Recordings in New South Wales also look set to be something of a force, so all power to them. I'm also a big fan of Darrin Verhagen's material (Shinjuku Thief/Filth etc) and much of David Thrussell's stuff (Black Lung etc). Streicher seems to have made quite a name for himself in some circles (if only for the implied politics), but I'm yet to hear any of his material. Historically speaking, as you know a number of trail blazers and some bigger names also originated in Australia, such as SPK, John Murphy, Oren Ambarchi, Strength Through Joy/Ostara etc. I'm looking forward to Cipher Production's "Underground Australia" compilation to get more of an idea of some of the harsh noise projects here.

There's definitely a healthy output of experimental music, but not too much of the darker material. As you put it once, there's plenty of the precious, chin-stroking academic experimentalism (a lot of them like to call themselves "sound artists", not musicians). More broadly speaking, I think your own magazine Spectrum, and a number of dedicated individuals/labels such as Dorobo and Arcane Recordings (RIP) helped provide a focal point and draw some international attention, but there's not much of a recognisable "scene" as such, other than the localised city-based scenes maybe. There's quite a bit of crossover which I find interesting - I stumbled into this sort of music through more straight-edged industrial - but I think there's still a lot of parochialism and tribalism when it comes to music here - this or any sort. It's interesting that even though Douglas P has been periodically living and recording in Australia (and just outside my home city of Adelaide) for quite a few years now, no-one really associates him with the country in any meaningful sense. His place of residence is regarded as almost incidental, even though - as I understand it at least - he has drawn some inspiration and peace from living in the Adelaide Hills. Having said that, I guess his heart will always lie with Europe.

I am also under the impression that you are currently and/or have recently completed University studies focusing on Asiatic matters. One track on an early tape contained a sample of an Indonesian Tribesman. How much has your study influenced or inspired your compositions?

- I finished a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree majoring in Asian Studies and Indonesian a few years ago, and continued teaching in related topics for a brief period. I even gave a couple of lectures on Japanese film and popular music, and included a little discussion of Japanese "underground" culture, playing the students some Masonna and showing a little of the film Tetsuo - that was fun. The sample you refer to was actually a Papua New Guinean tribesman in a documentary going nuts as he was about to be baptised by missionaries. Obviously he wasn't quite sure of his decision! I wouldn't really say my interest in Asia has directly influenced or inspired any of my music, but I'm always on the lookout for areas in which the two interests coincide. For a short time I was tracking down Asian experimental/industrial material outside the obvious output from Japan. There's a great cassette of death ambient material called "Xatya" from an Indonesian project, Worldhate.

What releases are on the on the imminent horizon for Isomer?

- Changes in my personal life (getting married, moving house, working on the whole domestic bliss thing) have been taking up a lot of time lately, so I haven't been working on a lot of new material. I remixed a track for a friend here in Adelaide with a project called The Spinning Room, and put together a power electronics track for Tasmanian-based label Cipher Productions for their compilation of Australian noise/experimental music, "Underground Australia". But other than those and the short piece for the Dagaz Music website, not much really! There are always a couple of things in the works at any given time, so I'm sure there'll be something sometime in the near future.

Finally, are there any further comments you would like to add?

- Thanks for your interest. [insert witty and/or lofty remark here]

GENOCIDE ORGAN

Genocide Organ have been in existence for over 17 years now, slowly but surely rising to a cult level within the heavy industrial/power electronics scene. This status has been achieved through the production of an extremely physical sound approach in combination with deluxe packaging, creating a collectors fetishism of sorts. Yet for all their notoriety within the post-industrial scene, Genocide Organ remains relatively obscure and somewhat shrouded in mystery. This is in part to do with the group refraining from including 'band' photos on releases, yet more specifically (on the most part) refusing to conduct interviews. Personally I am only aware of one interview, being that which was published in 1999 in Descent Magazine Issue 5, and even the introductory blurb to that interview stated the group had requested the interview to be removed (without success of course).

So, when considering the members of Genocide Organ, their actual personalities remain obscured for the above mentioned reasons, yet one fact remains certain, that the group contains four key members: Wilhelm Herich, R. Freisler, D.A.X & Doc M Riot (presumably all assumed identities), with R. Freisler later leaving the band to be replaced by B. Moloch (of Anenzephalia infamy). Notwithstanding the obscured identities, one member has become more recognizable than the remaining, being one Herr Wilhelm Herich, due to his collaborations with Anenzephalia and Der Blutharsch for the delivery of a number of live actions.

As a collective each of the four members has specific roles within the Genocide Organ collective, relating to studio composition, live mixing, video arts and stage performance. With regard to live actions they encompass a direct physical approach of noisescapes and confrontational vocals that also often incorporates installations ranging from video projections through to emblematic use of religious symbols and images political figureheads (ie: burning of a wooden/chainmesh cross, use of a oxy torch to cut the genocide organ symbol from a sheet of steel, display and later destruction of crosses plastered with images of political leaders etc).

In analyzing and critiquing Genocide Organ's recorded output via lyrics, texts images and dialogue samples, there is a clear focus on matters relating to war, the Ku Klux Klan, conspiracy theories, American imperialism, terrorism, the Third Reich, fetishism etc. Likewise many of their releases come armed with loaded titles such as "Klan Kountry", "Mind Control" and "The Truth Will Make You Free". Packing additionally utilises many images that are considered to have loaded connotations, or otherwise by virtue of their use seem to inherit a deeper meaning (for example take the face image on the cover of "The Truth Will Make You Free"). To put it in another context I quote Lina Baby Doll of Deutsch Nepal who has been a long standing fan and more recent comrade of the group:

"Genocide Organ, the heroes of German electronic chock-treatment are one of the most physical appearances within industrial culture. Every piece of sound they've released, and all live performances I ever experienced have been 100% "ultra" in all directions possible. Just to feel the weight of the heavy vinyl, study the sleeves and almost cut your hands open by the scalpels attached, among the dried bloodstains on the unpolished surface is an experience worth the long and hard search for the items. For me it's not the extreme approach of the group that make them interesting, it's the ability to withhold the possibility to go way to far out in the wasteland of cheap fetish commercialism, which for me is a sign of both intelligence and style. These are people who have got more to show than a poor tattoo and some piercings, this group shows you the truth whatever it might be. And the truth will make us free!"



Essentially the convergence of elements (visuals, titles, text, dialogue samples, set to extreme electronic sound and overlaid with shouted distorted vocals delivery), creates a sensory overload ensuring that ambivalence towards their releases is almost impossible. And within such a context Genocide Organ HAVE provoked reaction from listeners - be those extremists who perceive the group have certain sympathies that align with their own, or vocal detractors labeling the group racist, fascist, or more crudely - hate mongers. Likewise for those listeners intelligent enough (or otherwise uninterested) in making such simplistic and polarized views of Genocide Organ, merely the extremity of sound can likewise provoke reactions from revulsion through to pure pleasure (the pleasures received in pain is an amply reasonable adage here). Yet in creating a reaction and/or emotional response, can art legitimately use the interpretation of politics as the point of stimuli? I would argue that it is entirely legitimate. Granted that differing emotional responses may create a psychological barrier and therefore limiting the ability of many to fully appreciate certain kinds of musical and artistic expression, this however does in no way negate the validity of the interpretation of politics within art. Additionally if art is deemed to be the pinnacle of emotional expression, this still leaves scope for each individual to interpret each emotion intrinsically stimulated - be that positive or negative.

But what do Genocide Organ actually stand for and represent? Do they stand for something, or nothing at all? Are they a group simply taking a mirror to modern society, reflecting the squalled depths of hatred and violence that humanity is capable of sinking to, or do they truly embrace a nihilistic worldview and only stand to accelerate the modern world's decline? Alternately are they left wing, or right wing, religious or apolitical? Or are they simply purveyors of "ultra" dry humor and irony pushed to an absolute extreme? Put any of these assertions to the groups however, none will be forthcoming with affirming or denying such theories and/or allegations. The virtues of silence perhaps? Equally, are the questions raised in the listener's mind significantly more important than any answer that the group could ever provide?

Likewise with reference to modern society are there any political or philosophical ideas which can be viewed in a simplistic black and white context? Consequently could it be said that Genocide Organ embrace the infinite simal shades of interpretative grey in the way they choose to operate? Quoting from the aforementioned Descent interview it might just give some insight into the mindset of the group (or failing that, simply adding to the confusion): "We never say what we think, and we never believe what we say, and if we tell the truth by accident, we hide it under so many lies that it is difficult to find out" and "Everything is as it is and nothing is as it should be". (Descent Volume 5: The Death Issue June 1999).

It is clear that that there is no single or for that matter simple interpretation that can be said to holistically represent Genocide Organ, and therefore it is useless for anyone but the group themselves to pontificate about knowing the exact answer. Thus without providing any sort of iron clad theory, could the question be posed: is confusion the real key to Genocide Organ's intent? The final interpretation is up to you...

Richard Stevenson
January, 2003

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Drone Records was established in January 1993 by Stefan Knappe (ex-Maëror Tri (...), Troum). It functions as a vinyl-only label, releasing 7" discs of international groups and artists from the wide area of experimental sound creations. The first editions of the releases are limited to 250 copies, coming in coloured or clear vinyl and when the first edition has been sold out, a second edition of 300 copies will be released on black or coloured vinyl. The cover artwork is always made by the artist; the first editions often feature hand made special sleeves whereas the second editions usually have printed sleeves.

Drone Records declares itself as uncommercial and fights against the capitalistic CD industry, for the preservation of vinyl, against mass production and for creative individuality as well as for the preservation of an independent networking scene to express new thoughts and ideas, society criticism and unprejudiced art.

Drone Records is especially focused on new atmospheric music that has a certain 'mind challenging' character, thus supporting the sensibility of the human senses. Quoting their own statement of intent: "Drone Records releases music for the right side of your brain."

Drone Records is one of the few labels who has succeeded in maintaining their original idea and to create their own 'brand' from it. When you founded the label in January 1993, how conscious was your idea about what the label should be like then and in the future? I could imagine that the first ideas (the whole concept of only releasing 7"es, hand made sleeves, later re-releases) came about somehow by accident and later became established as guidelines for the label.

- You guessed right! First we just wanted to put out the first Maëror Tri vinyl. In order to create something special and with no graphic-design abilities, we made those handsprayed sleeves. From this there arose the idea to do a whole series with the same concept - always handmade covers by the artists.

The whole 'drone' concept has been with you since the very beginning. How do you personally see the concept of a drone? What is a drone?

- Damn, that's a question! I think basically a drone is a "minimally shifting, floating long tone". But for me or for us it was always a bit more, using a wider spectrum of sounds and frequencies. I think what is decisive (and more broader) is the floating, atmospheric character of a sound-entity. So even harsher sounds, or more concrete elements brought together in a floating way, can be drones or "a drone". To regard it more visually maybe, a drone is like an energy-stream moving in time and space where I can put parts of my deeper self into, and leave parts of the more

rational mind behind - so to say "go with the drone" and forget thinking by doing this.

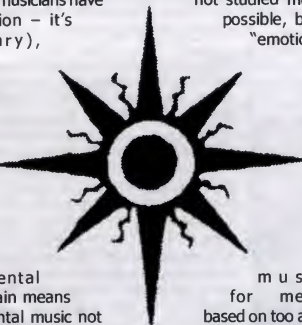
I think the original drone-conception (which was in fact unknown to me in 1993) from LA MONTE YOUNG or original INDIAN MUSIC is a bit different - decisive is that it's really one tone you play, and meant is a real TONE. I was pretty amazed to find out later about the history of "drone" music.

By the way, I remember somebody in the network asking many people by e-mail: "what is a perfect drone?" - don't know if he ever published all answers, but would really like to read the results once. He is called Martin Friberg and comes from Sweden if I recall correctly.

In a way, Drone Records has created a sort of a network of artists and bands around it which could be seen as a scene of its own. Do you think that Drone Rec. is a part of some particular scene? Do you have a problem if someone connects Drone Rec. to the contemporary industrial scene (what ever that is these days)?

- No. I see Drone indeed as a further development of the (post-)Industrial-scene, as explained before. At the end many ideas and concepts from the pre-Industrial-time can be re-found in Industrial and thus also formed "today's Drone-scene". Important for me was also the cassette-scene with the aim of building a non-commercial network of creative minds (see also Klaus Jochims [founder of TELEPHRIQUE and in former times doing the DRAHTFUNK label] NETWORK-idea), a network of many people and not just putting out the same three or four projects all the time. But I'm not sure if you can really speak of a special scene around Drone Records. There are many labels who publish stuff that goes more or less into the same direction, atmospheric noise, dark ambience, ambient Industrial, there are many notions for a sound music that is similar. I would like to see Drone Recs. more as a part of a broader music-scene: it's a kind of non-academic (in the sense the musicians have not studied music or composition - it's possible, but not necessary), "emotional"

DRONE RECORDS



experimental music", which again means for me it's experimental music not based on too abstract concepts, but on the sensitivity for SOUND itself. Maybe one could say: experimental music done by HEART and not by BRAIN. And there's of course all kinds of different types of styles existing in this broader understood "scene".

Why did you choose the medium of releasing 7" vinyls? I personally love that format, but there are lots of people who don't like to listen to this particular style of sounds on such a format because you have to be constantly turning the sides and also the playing time is very restricted.

- But this is exactly the gain you have from it: you only listen to one side, and during that time (knowing you have to turn it again soon) you can't do much more, except: listening. The 7" format is a very nice medium to fully concentrate and focus on the music. And to listen 5 minutes very concentrated can be much more satisfying than listening 5 hours with no pause, but just as a background. Really going INTO something, and if it's just 5 minutes, can touch you deep inside and kind of "strengthen" your core-feeling of existence.

You have already released a 7" by one Finnish band, Mnem and will be later releasing material from no Xivic as well. What do you think of the Finnish industrial/ambient etc. scene in general and are there any bands who you'd like to mention?

- Hm, I must admit that I don't know so much artists working in this scene in Finland, MNEM and KAOS CONTROL were my first real stable contacts. There are some new contacts like MUSICALLY INCORRECT RECORDS with the great RATS WITH WINGS (not totally sure if they are Finnish though) - releases, so it seems it's a small, but vital scene.

Having worked in the industrial/ambient/drone scene for such a long time, how do you see that the whole thing has changed over the years? For example, the tape scene has become very minimal whereas the CDr is extremely popular these days. Any thoughts on this?

- Sure, the CDR-scene is today's cassette-scene in a way, working usually with the same principles. It seems the formats might change but there's always enough activists

doing "their" thing apart from the mainstream, even apart from "alternative" mainstream (whatever that means). I think there's a point where personal communication & exchange of ideas/philosophy/politics & of course the experiencing of other peoples music/art becomes more important than making money. And at this point (which is not always clear to define of course) the real "alternative" to the culture-industry begins. The experimental experimental / ambient / drone / whatever-scene has grown over the years if you ask me - first there were only few acts with rather high editions, now, beginning with the cassette-culture there is an absolute mass of self-produced music working in that area - editions are smaller, the whole is not surveyable anymore. But there's always something new to discover on the other hand. Maybe it's my very subjective view as I grew up in this scene - but regarding the amounts of demos I get with good material, I can only state that the whole scene must be growing.

You have also established a sort of a side-label, Transgender Records which has thus far released material from your own band, Troum. Do you have plans of releasing other projects on this label as well or will that be the business of Drone Records?

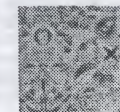
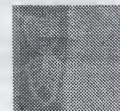
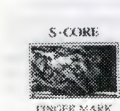
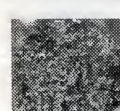
- At the moment only Troum-stuff and Troum-collaborations, also due to lack of time..

Could you give us a list of some artists/bands whose 7" releases will see the light of day on Drone Records in 2003?

- Not sure if they all will come out in 2003, but here are some definite plans: NO XIVIC is a project from Finland with no release yet, but the demos he send were so overwhelming genius that I couldn't resist. Very intense digital ambience. With SOLEILKRAAST it was the same, a project from France (originally involved in Reggae-bands and African music but then he changed totally - without knowing any experimental stuff, into atmospheric-noise), which goes into a similar direction. Then we have CISFINITUM from Moscow, doing a very dark form of experimental drone & industrial, both members being classically trained as musicians! YANNICK DAUBY will do another 7", the very first split 7", with MICHAEL NORTHAM. DAUBY (from France) is for me one of the best field-recording artists, but he's not very known so far. I guess MICHAEL NORTHAM needs no introduction? Let me mention two other artists, CHRISTIAN DERGARABEDIAN, originally from Argentina now living in Spain, and OVUM from Sweden, both doing very original & daring atmospheric music since years. These 6 should be the next drones.. of course changes are always possible.

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www.dronerecords.com**



KNIFE LADDER

Knifeladder are quite a unique entity within the experimental industrial underground who are surely to have their profile raised significantly with the recent release of their debut CD "Organic Traces" on a new London based Operative Records. Containing a broad ritual industrial/tribal experimental sound, this is achieved by the three members through a process of both composition and improvisation to produce an intensely woven melange of sound. Utilising percussion (standing kit rather than a traditional seated drum kit), vocals (often resembling an instrument rather than voice), bass guitar (used to produce soundscapes rather than melody), and harsh electronics and sound loops, Knifeladder's sound is unconventional and quite different from anything you will have heard before. Yet, to give broad categorisations it could be said that Knifeladder interweaves elements of dark ambience, martial industrial and rhythmic noise to create their "organic/industrial hybrid". Whilst on introductions it is also worthwhile highlighting the pedigree of the group's members, featuring: John Murphy (SPK, Current 93, Shriekback, Orchestra of Skin and Bone, Max Q, the Associates and others), Hunter Barr (Infant Skull Surgery and Altered States) and Andrew Trail (Inertia and Ministry of Love). Intrigued? You should be! Read on...

Before we launch into the Knifeladder interview, it could be said that the name 'John Murphy' is almost an iconic one within underground industrial/post industrial genres due to your extensive and lengthy involvement with such scenes. Given I do not want to pass up this opportunity to ask you about this involvement (and the evolution of your musical interests within more underground oriented genres), if you would be so obliged could you provide a historical rundown of involvement with industrial/post industrial music, relating to both your own projects and likewise collaborations with others?

JM: I was sort of hoping that you would not possibly ask this question. A total historical rundown of my musical involvement's since the mid to late 1970s until the present day would probably amount to many pages and would drive your readers and maybe myself to total madness as it is a rather erratic topsy turvy sort of musical and artistic history cum misdemeanours. I have been involved with playing, recording and performing many differing styles of music, over the past 25 years or so chiefly both in OZ and Europe since you have asked me mainly for some sort of rundown on my various involvements in the industrial/post industrial and general experimental areas of music I will attempt to limit myself to these areas, though at times this may be a bit difficult as certain genres from time to time do cross over in my career.

TO CUT A VERY LONG AND COMPLICATED STORY SHORT:

Without going into my family background and history too much I have played music (chiefly various sorts of percussion) from an early age. In my early teenage years in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne I became very interested in what was labelled "unusual and obscure" sorts of music such as Krautrock, European prog rock, the arctic side of Glam Rock such as Bowie, Roxy Music, Eno Robert Fripp/King Crimson and the like, 20th century avant garde and classical music pre punk/glam music and outrage of Iggy and the Stooges, New York Dolls, Hendrix, Captain Beefheart early Zappa obscure and weird 60s psychedelia, some of the better aspects of jazz rock fusion ...just to name a few things that caught my ears and eyes. I was always an ardent anglophile in music, culture and general humour.

In late 1977 I became involved with the emerging Melb punk rock/new wave scene being one of the few decent drummers around interested in this area I played with a punk rock act called News and then in mid 1978 helped form the pioneering OZ electronic act Whirlyworld with Ollie Olsen which had a few local releases. I was also heavily involved in the late 70s Melbourne experimental "Little Bands" scene which was sort of connected with Whirlyworld that was when I really started to investigate the industrial side of things as a noise, feedback enthusiast and a big fan of import Throbbing Gristle and Cabaret Voltaire albums plus anything similar in that vein. Whirlyworld had gone as far as it could go in the OZ music scene of that time so I moved to London in early January 1980 and soon after started playing with Scottish act The Associates and for the next few years until the mid 1980s worked with quite a variety of different semi mainstream acts ...such as the Associates, Shriekback, Nico (Drama of Exile recording sessions mainly) Welsh goth act Gene Loves Gezebel, The The (briefly), Foetus (briefly) and SPK (touring and recording). I also recorded with all these acts as well as playing some live shows thru out Europe.

On the more industrial/experimental side of things I started working on my own industrial noise power electronics project called Krang Music (many years later re-released on the Tesco label in Germany as Kraeng) in early 1981 or whereabouts as I said before I was a very large T.G fan and was sort of aware of the very early Whitehouse as well...besides having known of SPK in OZ since early 1979. Somehow or other I sort of got to know William Bennett of Whitehouse and Steve Stapleton of Nurse With Wound around this time I also worked on another project with Ollie Olsen around this time named Hugo Klang which had some industrial/electronic influences as well

as releasing a Krang Music cassette which seem to sell quite well and later I found out turned up in the most unusual places. Between 1982/83 I played with Whitehouse at all their early live events around London...operating my trusty EMS AKS modular synth and mic feedback.

During 1983 I also worked with David Tibet in Dogs Blood Order and the early recordings and live shows of Current 93 plus also Lustmord, Nurse With Wound & SPK. I put together my own industrial duo called Krang which recorded the soundtrack for a video released thru the SPK associated video unit called Twin Vision, plus played the odd live date as well in the UK and Holland.

I returned to Melbourne and OZ mid 1980s and once again worked with Ollie Olsen in the Orchestra Of Skin and Bone (recorded for an album and did soundtracks for local underground films) until towards the end of 1986 or whereabouts. Around this time I became involved with film soundscapes and track work (Dogs In Space) for a bit of fun and despair. I also for a laugh put together noise feedback guitar and tapes at the Slub which generally tormented audiences around the east coast of OZ in the late 80s until the early 90s. This act released one album and a few singles on various labels including some based in the USA. There was also another noise rock act called Dumb and the Ugly for which I provided percussion and various noises around this time as well, featuring various well known Melbourne musicians. I worked with a lot of different musical acts in the late 1980s/early 1990s, far too many to list, really, but a few examples: Box the Jesuit, The Wreckery, the Index, Max Q, featuring Michael Hutchence, Not Drowning Waving, Monroes Fur, Harpoon, Steve Cummings, playing live gig and recording, also quite a bit of session work in both Melb and Sydney... a jobbing muso...!!

On the industrial/experimental side of things...between the late 80s and mid 90s...I sometimes performed and recorded my solo projects such as My Father of Serpents also titled at times Ophiolatreia (forerunner to Shining Vril), Kraeng, Subcutaneous Theatre with Debra Petrovitch and Andrew Trail (another forerunner of Shining Vril) in both Melb and Sydney.



There were also quite a few collaborations with others which was for both recordings and live shows. These were Zone Void (with Ulex Zane of Streicher), Disciples of None (also with Ulex), Jaundice Eye/Dweller on the Threshold (ritualistic dark ambient electronic), Stress of Terror (late 80s industrial percussion noises and tapes that played in Melb to apathetic response), Browning Mummy (old school industrial), GUM (industrial duo), Sooterkin Flesh (similar to Whitehouse and early NON with drums), Blood and Iron (like Autopsia and Laibach with David Booth who now drums for Der Blutharsch), a few one off performances and recording with Dominik Guerin (originally of SPK) under the name of Last Dominion Lost, Psychic Date (experimental loop heavy industrial guitar noise) with old friend of mine named Peter Jones and Andrew Trail named. I also did a few more sessions at times with Ollie Olsen in Melbourne.

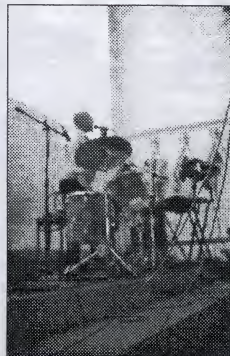
Not particularly enjoying life besides all this sort of musical and artistic activity I purely by chance (destiny?? perhaps!) literally bumped into Douglas P of Death In June on one of his periodic visits to OZ in mid 1993. We renewed our friendship and in the mid 1990s we recorded together in Australia along with Boyd Rice which was later released as the Scorpion Wind album and CD. I played quite a few different instruments and bits of percussion plus noises on the sessions for this release plus had a hand in composing at least one of the songs if my memory serves me rightly. Soon (a few months later) afterwards I returned o/seas to Europe to play percussion on some live dates with Death In June in London, Germany, France and Belgium and I have been performing on live shows with DJ in many different countries ever since. Besides this my main musical activities over the past few years since early 1997 has been Knifeladder and my own solo project Shining Vril since late 1998 or whereabouts. This project is sort of difficult to adequately describe as it crosses over a few different genres such as ritualistic post industrial/sinister dark ambience, or similar gobbledegook. I'm not one on rules or genres.

On the collaboration side of things over the past few years I have done some recording sessions and the odd live show for Ostara, played percussion live with Der Blutharsch on some European shows in 98/99, some live work with Fire and Ice on the 98 European DJ tour, played percussion with Boyd Rice/NON on the last European and north American DJ/NON tours, worked/recorded with English folksong artist Andrew King, Recorded and played the odd live show with Naevus in the UK and Germany and contributed some sounds to recordings by the Sword Volcano Complex, Wertham, Forresta Di Ferro in Italy, Browning Mummy back in OZ, Genocide Organ. This is about it as far as I can remember and I have gained overall quite a deal of knowledge for the development of my own and Knifeladder's ideas out of all of this. I also hope all this hasn't been too complicated for the reader to get his or her head around. I will be happy to explain more of my personal musical history etc if anyone wants to contact me about all this. Over and out/good night!!

Moving onto Knifeladder, this musical endeavour is one of your newer projects featuring yourself, Andrew Trail (both being Australian ex-patriots now based in London) and

Hunter Barr. What introductory information can you provide about this project and how you came to form the group?

AT: The seeds of Knifeladder were probably in Australia in 1991 when John and myself performed as My Father of Serpents at what turned out to be my last performance there. Despite being greeted with almost universal indifference, an early template of minimal samples and percussion was formed then. It wasn't until many years later I found myself thinking about that show when I literally bumped into him in the pedestrian tunnel in bank station - a bizarre case of synchronicity. He was on the first UK tour of DJ as a percussionist and we got back in touch after the tour. We decided to do some live free form rehearsals in a converted church in Islington, and after a few sessions decided to form a group. I had been in touch with Hunter for several years since he was in Infant Skull Surgery, and since he was between projects we were glad to purloin him for Knifeladder.



As Knifeladder is a moniker that could have rather esoteric/spiritual connotations, what led this being chosen, this and does the name signify a specific pursuit with the ritual industrial/tribal experimental soundscapes you produce?

AT: The name Knifeladder came from a picture John had from the Chinese Monkey God Festival, showing a man climbing a ladder of blades. It represents to me a test of faith, and escalation of tension and an attempt to reach the unattainable through ordeal - much like playing experimental music!

In that you describe Knifeladder as "an organic/industrial hybrid" would you care to expand on this description?

AT: Many of the sounds in Knifeladder are taken from organic sources, mostly home made the use of live percussion, shanai and largely unaffected human voice, mixed with a harsh experimental aesthetic led us to this working definition. The presence of actual sweat is palpable on the recordings and live shows, and we are trying to avoid the use of technology to correct performances or mistakes, leaving them in as part of the process. Knifeladder try to use organic sounds in the production of their songs i.e. using home made samples, creating their own unique sounds along with the songs creation, which follows an improvised non-formulaic method. Often allowing the material to develop itself organically. As well as the nature of the samples, live electronics, and loops, we try to use real instrumentation as often as possible, such as shanai, metal percussion and live bass...

Via the musical experimentation that you are pursuing through Knifeladder, would you identify any specific musical, philosophical, theoretical, spiritual etc aims?

JM: The idea of music and rhythm being a force that can be used in order to attain an altered state of consciousness is of great interest to us. So although we have no specific philosophical or spiritual leaning, the use of Eastern instrumentation, scales and approach to the use of music being more than simply a collection of notes and beats is inspiring. While we have no actual, specific philosophical and spiritual aims in the music of Knifeladder various aesthetics covering these area come into play at times in Knifeladder's sound and compositions. We are all very interested in aspects of the ritualistic trance state and various forms of altered states of consciousness and gnosis. These come into our music via the form of cyclic repetition and a conscious effort to use non western times and rhythm signatures coming from the horn and percussion patterns mostly. I have studied and been heavily influenced by non western percussion from various parts of the world and have brought aspects of this into the sound of Knifeladder using at times "Magical" rhythms produced intentionally to attain a ritualized Gnostic state of mind and being for both the performer and audience/listener.

Given that Knifeladder use a process of composition and improvisation to write your music, firstly how do you approach the creation of a new track? Additionally with the element of improvisation do you find that the tracks morph and evolve significantly over time?

HB: Firstly, generally (but not exclusively) our music is inspired by hearing a particular sound/noise/loop. We then allow ourselves to "organically", or naturally, engineer this into a piece of music or develop a soundscape. However at other times we may begin with a rhythm and begin layering piece by piece on top of this creating a crescendo of developing sound. Secondly, the improvised nature of our music does mean that the tracks naturally evolve. An understanding of what's developing allows us to alter the nature of a track as well. This has benefits for playing our live shows, as tracks can be adapted for more extreme noise or more understated and ambient soundscapes.



Your first official release as Knifeladder was a split CD (the other half being another of your solo projects Shining Vril) released on the CAPP label from Greece, however this release appeared to be showcase of Knifeladder's sound given it contained both studio and live material. Overall how do you feel that the Knifeladder material on this disc received?

HB: From the reviews I have read, the "Split" CD was very well received. People seemed to want to hear more of Knifeladder's work, which was very flattering. We wanted to show that our live performances were not compromised in any way,

as there are no sequences or backing tapes used. Our recordings are live, and as much about a performance as performing for an audience.

Recently you have issued your debut full length CD "Organic Traces" on Operative Records, which I described as being unique within a broad ritual industrial/tribal experimental sound. How satisfied are you with the finished

results of this disc and what response has the album garnered thus far?

HB: We are very pleased with "Organic Traces". We struggled, originally, to get the energy of a live performance onto tape. But then worked out a method to capture a live performance with the emotion of a live performance in the often sterile environment of the recording studio. Now listening back to the album, all the energy is there and with great dynamics, which we feel to be very important. The response has been fantastic. Very positive. The word "unique" often being used which is good, as it is not a style that is easily pigeonholed. The majority of people seem to hear it as a new sound with no real comparisons. The only disadvantage with this is that general accessibility is limited as without belonging to a specific genre it could be missed by some people who we would otherwise want to hear it.

Knifeladder is not a project that shies away from playing live given you have undertaken performances both in the UK and Germany. Having witnessed one of your performances, it was rather an intense experience given the use of wall of bass guitar noise, electronic loops, vocals and standing percussion. What would be some of the highlight Knifeladder performances you would care to mention?

HB: Personally there are two performances which stand out for myself. The first being a show at The Garage in London, playing with Sulphur and Sensorium (both very much in the vein of NIN, Marilyn Manson, Goth-Industrial), a mismatch of acts for us. We played our set with few compromises and yet the audience was very receptive and hence upped our enthusiasm. The second one was one of the more recent shows at London's Spitz club with Shock Headed Peters, and members of Neither World and Sorrow. This was a very lively sounding room with a much smaller PA, so we decided to change our sound to suit the venue and other acts. We tried to create a sense of tension and an ambience, which was equally as gripping but a much more controlled performance at a much lower volume without any compromise of intensity.

With Knifeladder containing two Australians, how do you view the Australian scene for the styles of music you produce? Additionally are there any Australian groups that you would rate as deserving a mention to international listeners who may not have heard of them before?

JM: Both Andrew and myself have had extensive experience of playing electronic, experimental and industrial music in OZ in the 80s and 90s and the end result was not overly encouraging as we had to deal with general audience apathy, closure of venues in both Melbourne and Sydney, the devouring cultural beast of dance music and rave culture which seduced many from our ranks, plus the good old "Cultural Cringe" which often rears its head in OZ and above all the conservative, parochial and insular nature of the OZ music industry which has hampered and hindered many artists of vision since it is mainly populated by self satisfied fools and morons.

I go back to OZ fairly regularly and things seem to have improved somewhat especially it seems in Melbourne which seems to have developed a large experimental orientated scene in the last 6 years or so. Even so I still personally have my doubts if there would be much room for an unusual musical entity like Knifeladder, as we tend to cross several musical boundaries and are far, far more "left field" and advanced than most, if not all OZ indie. Alternative acts who often strike me as competent but quite faceless, uninspiring and I'm afraid to say pretty damn dull. Also I should say that most Australians if they think of industrial music at all think of it in the American way basically a metal orientated sound with added samplers/noises as opposed to the European definition, not Rock orientated at all.

The experimental scene in OZ also seems to be very academic, lap top and Boffin orientated... very Wire mag in general aesthetics... I am not at all sure there are many actual industrial, ritualistic, dark ambient orientated acts involved within it. I have no actual idea what they would think of us as we are possibly coming from a different angle altogether. We currently are getting quite a deal of interest from all over the globe especially the northern hemisphere but except for yourself and Goth Nation mag practically none from Australia something I think both Andrew and myself have learned to live with over the years...Ho Hum...

AT: I'm mainly only aware of people I know doing music in Australia, with a few exceptions mentioned by John. Navigating Mans Ruin, Jaundice Eye, Psychic Date and Alien Christ - who may have all broken up by now. Last time I was back in Sydney there was still a chronic lack of venues - who needs music when you have 24 hour drinking. I hope to see a time where the young people there are less prepared to embrace some filtered Americanised version of youth culture and demand a unique voice of their own.

There are some fantastic musicians in Australia, many with unique visions, but without a forum to interact, inevitable many are going to move over to Europe and leave us with the poker machines and that horrendous institution of Pub rock. I hope these slightly disparaging remarks of ours antagonise shedloads of groups into action, to prove us wrong!

Alternately, what artists/projects - be they related to the underground post industrial scene or outside of it - are currently holding your interest?

HB: Firstly, the acts on Operative Records are not only interesting but a good representation of London's truly alternative scene. They are not only good but it is also important to recognise that these acts are trying to do something new and intense to listen to. Other acts, such as Dieter Muh, I find very enjoyable to listen to, as well as watching live. They have a great way of combining noise with rhythm. Also Coil always have to be seen live. Shows that leave you hypnotised.

AT: We are fortunate to have 2 experimental clubs operating in

London - Rective and Hinoeuma, who have been instrumental in bringing acts over to Britain the last few years. Groups outside of Operative who I rate are Thorofon, Genocide Organ, Add N to X - I could go on forever. I see an average of 15 bands a month, and the amount of good stuff out there is astounding. Anyone who thinks it all ended in the eighties is simply not looking hard enough.

John, given that I have met you on various occasions both in Australia and the UK, I know that you split your time living between these. Why do you choose to do this?

JM: Look this is rather a difficult question for me to adequately answer (I don't 100 per cent know the answer myself) and I am not at all sure it is entirely relevant to the other questions about Knifeladder. Nevertheless I will attempt to give you all some sort of idea why I choose to do this...



Firstly the opportunity was presented to me to sort of do this some years ago in the mid 1990s via my friendship with Douglas P of Death In June and I believe I would have been a bit of a damn fool not to chance it. So as to speak when given the opportunity to tour and live outside of OZ for an indefinite period I grasped this unforeseen opportunity with both hands and I am very glad that I did so for things in general have improved greatly for me over the years. I had little to lose as not a great deal was happening for me in OZ and I had little emotional, family or sentimental ties to hold me back. There is a part of my personality that thrives on change and I basically needed to reinvent myself once again and challenge myself in many different areas and I just wasn't getting this sort of stimulation where I was living in OZ. There were just not many people locally on my particular wavelength and I had had enough of trying to compromise with others in both musical, artistic and social situations. I could never find just the right combination of musical collaborators, there was always some sort of problem either personal or musical differences. I was sort of slowly going around in circles getting pretty much nowhere in virtually all of my activities and slowly but surely losing it big time. I needed to reconnect with people who I had something in common with (such as Andrew Trail, one of the few people I had any time for in OZ) and who were supportive and doing interesting things and I'm afraid most of these were scattered in far flung corners of the globe, not Melbourne or Sydney. The only real criticism I have personally received have been from so called "friends" and old pals based in these 2 cities. My solo project Shining Vril in particular has received negative response from a lot of my old acquaintances... who seem to dislike my "Angst devil music" (their description) I could say a hell of a lot more on all this but won't for now.

John, during a number of in person discussions I have had with you, one topic that cropped up on a number of occasions was the inability to make any sort of proper living from underground experimental/industrial music. In that you seem to be able to travel through Australia and UK/Europe on a reasonably regular basis, how are you able to manage this? I also assume that this might have led to some interesting jobs in order to finance such travels?

JM: Again this is a question that I am a bit reluctant to explore fully with everyone at the risk of appearing that I have something to hide which may be true only I know. My so-called travelling between OZ and Europe may look sort of impressive to an outsider but I have made quite a few personal sacrifices in the pursuit of my so called "career" over the years and have also made a few spectacular mistakes along the way. At times I have also done the clichéd "starving artist" bit back in my earlier days, both in various parts of OZ and the UK, something I have little wish to repeat. I currently don't live a particularly enviable life style, rather frugal at times in actual fact. I do not have a permanent residence anywhere, not a great deal to be envious about if you care to look at it objectively. I suppose I have sort of lived a fairly unusual life in many respects and currently sort of live as a classic "eccentric sort of Bohemian existence", something that is a sort of grand old OZ expat tradition. If you look thru the history books on alternative culture you will find quite a few Australians have sort of followed this tradition since the 19th century and have been involved in all sorts of different cultural movements around the globe, but this is getting off the track somewhat...

To survive and fund myself over the years I have done quite a few different and possibly unusual jobs cum occupations various forms of temp work involvement in running recording and rehearsal rooms in both OZ and the UK, hotel and restaurant work, extra on TV and various films, art modelling, landscape gardening, labouring on building sites, working in a quarry, stocktaking at record distribution plants, packing and delivering CDs, briefly working for the OZ Public (civil) service, helping run a bookstore and new age crystal centre and a lot of other semi ridiculous things I would prefer to forget.

I have never been particularly good at manipulating the arts council grants system, unlike some other OZ experimental/industrial people I know. This is very much a who you know sort of club it seems to me anyway... I have had to rely more on my own endeavours.

Talking to quite a few of my industrial and fringe music contemporaries in various parts of the globe it still seems that most do not live entirely off their musical output and have some other sort of income often entirely non related to music at all. Some also live in countries with a generous grant system particularly Scandinavia I have noticed. Of course there are also quite a few exceptions to all who do quite well financially...

In that many underground post industrial/power electronics/neo-folk type projects inhabit a political sphere by topics covered (intentional or otherwise), since spending some time in the UK and Europe I have noted that many fans and/or detractors are highly polarized in their views regarding extreme left and right persuasions. What is your opinion regarding this, and additionally how do you view this in the context of Australia? (being a country where such political schisms are not nearly as pronounced).

AT: Any desire to return to root music is likely to be hijacked by extreme right or left wing elements, keeping in mind that both equate to a kind of totalitarianism totally abhorrent to any individualists. I don't feel it as serious threat as it has been painted. I have yet to see people of mixed race or ethnicity abused or attacked in these contexts.

My main bone of contention is a lot of mediocre acts use this imagery as a way of attracting attention to themselves, effectively masking the fact that they are very conservative musically. It is part of an inevitable backlash against not so much the presence, but the omnipresence of dance music in Western culture.

I also would defend the choice of individuals to have the choice of amorality in their art.

In short, people everywhere are resisting the homogenisation of culture; it is just unfortunate that so many choose to do so by using imagery from a very dark and evil time.

On a related topic it is worthwhile highlighting that all members of Knifeladder are involved in the relatively new 'Operative Records'. What comments would you like to make about the concept of this emerging label?

AT: Operative Records was formed primarily because they're appeared to be a lack of a broad based label in the UK. All the acts have proved their commitment over time by releasing their own material and playing live in various contexts. It is a label for active people who agree on the necessity of uniting against the increased genrefication and niche marketing of music. Hence, we have power noise group Muffpunch in the same context as English traditional singer Andrew King (Emblem), the lyrically dense power acoustic duo Naevus alongside the death drone antics of Gaya Donadio's Antichild League. There is a diversity and richness in music here now, and I feel it to be a moral imperative to somehow drag it into the spotlight.

To conclude, what releases can we expect from Operative Records and Knifeladder in the near future?

AT: We are expecting a series of collaborative singles from Andrew Liles and Ruse. Also there is an album due from Knives, the free form guitar/electronic combo. Antivalium, the pure electronic Knifeladder splinter group will be releasing something soon. Already we have releases

from Leisurehive, Naevus and ourselves, and of course the compilation album first. Unfortunately there are no plans to release material from other artists until every act on First has a release. I feel we owe it to those who have been there from the start.

JM: We have a few tracks coming out on various compilation CD releases in Europe in the next few months. These tracks are titled "Born Under Fire" and "Carousel" and the compilations are "Audacia Imperat" out on Oktagon Recs in Italy, and the Nail Recs compilation "Tal Mont De Lune" due for release pretty soon I believe thru our Europe. Possibly one or 2 unexpected things could be on the horizon.. but we will say no more for now.



Could you please fill us in on the latest happenings with Troum? New releases? Live performances?

- We played some exciting gigs in Russia (November last year) and made a small & wonderful tour in France and Belgium this March (2003). Speaking of releases, new came out the DARVESH 10" on Beta-Lactam Ring records, and the SYMBIOSIS mCD on our own label (the first 200 copies came in an extreme handmade pyramid-package made by 31RADJAN, which are now gone totally).

Troum consists partially of the same personnel as the late Maëror Tri (...). Even though the latter is already long dead and buried, it would be interesting to know the reasons behind ending the band?

- Well, we can't go too much into detail, let's say "personal reasons": LOVE, HATE, MONEY, WOMEN, DRUGS, CRIME, the usual things. Sometimes reality is stronger than the musical sphere.

Looking back, what sort of sentiments do you have towards the time you worked as Maëror Tri (...)?

- Hm, "we were younger then and innocent" basically, which means also less matured: Maëror Tri was in a way wilder, more naive but also more enthusiastic ("we can play with no payment as support for band X in the afternoon? GREAT, let's do it!"). We had these long weekend-sessions doing nothing else than music and taking drugs. Maëror Tri was like "growing up" for us, a great chaotic experience, where we tried & experimented with everything that came into our hands. But also we remember the feeling of "doing your own thing even if nobody cares".

How do Troum's basic ideas differ from those of Maëror Tri (...)? Obviously there are some differences if their realisation could only happen through a completely new band?

- After the split we didn't want to use the same name with a different personal line-up. That was clear anyway. Maëror TRI was three persons obviously, should we rename in Maëror DUO? It's not possible to say: there was TROUM and suddenly everything sounded different and we had new approach. As with Maëror Tri, it all happened in a long and slow process. We see now that with TROUM we work more focused on composition and less improvised. We have less problems to co-operate, it's "working together with not much words needed". It's, to a certain extent, like a symbiosis.

Speaking of a philosophical or conceptual approach, we see Maëror Tri as being more dealing with Consciousness-questions, whereas Troum went further to explore the Unconscious more. Or you could say: it's not our main intention to "enlarge consciousness" anymore, but to "understand better the dark continent of the mind". We think Troum goes a step further or deeper, both musically and philosophically!

Troum has been described as "music which goes straight into the subconsciousness". What does this mean exactly?

- Basically, this refers to the thesis that certain music effects more on the unconscious level than others, apart from the "subjective" factor. That's also what we mean with the term "Tiefenmusik": It's not music meant to be analyzed with rational means, it's music for direct affective perception, "music created with the belly" as we say in German. You don't get clear verbal messages from it. It is music that should give you the possibility to transcend your mind, to come so to say "in better contact" with your inner mind. It's difficult to speak about this area of mind as it's not really reachable by words - it's the pre-verbal, "archaic" mind existing in the infant before any conscious thought is possible.

The word 'troum' obviously refers to dreams. Troum also uses a lot of themes/concepts related to some very archaic and primitive thoughts and phenomena. Do you think that nowadays dreams are the only way of getting close to that primitive being from which we contemporary people all originate from?

- You could perhaps say that dreams give us a hint to "archaic" sensations. Dreams are not controllable, which makes them very special in this "categorized",

pseudo-rational (based on capitalistic aims) world. Dreams symbolize the irrational, more close to early-life-form existence.

No, of course dreams are not the only way to getting close to this area of mind. In fact, any creative process (even working) is deeply linked with this sphere. And dreaming is a creative process, too.

We think there is a very deep connection between dreams and music, as both uses the same "non-logical" inner structure. They are as phenomena both based in very early, pre-verbal infant experiencing (mother-child-interaction). They use the same "grammar" so to say. Besides that, within ART (music) and DREAMS lies the potential of CHANGE, of making an experience of so far not-lived existence-forms.



Dreams are often related to some sort of escapism as brief moments away from our everyday lives. Do you see them this way? Couldn't they be more efficiently utilised as a form of self realisation and introspection instead of using them for mere

escapism?

- Well, you answered the question already yourself. Of course, we don't see dreams as pure escapism.

In our dreams the basic inner conflicts are manifesting, they show us their (distorted and symbolized) face. It is not possible to escape from these conflicts (which are conflicts of the inner drive-forces or wishes and the outer-world, society, etc.), - even in dreams. Dreams are already treatments of these conflicts. So, to link dreams with escapism is just a misunderstanding.

troum

The Tjukurrpa trilogy is representing three different sides to Troum's sound. Why the decision to separate these different elements (harmonies, drones, rhythms) instead of keeping them combined together?

- We always kept them together usually, so for doing something different, we divided them. We thought that for us - and for listeners hopefully - it could be interesting to see these basic expressive elements more focused on one whole album. And from the reactions we got we see that it really made sense. Some people like HARMONIES (pt. 1) much more than DRONES (pt. 2), and vice versa. The third part (RHYTHMS AND PULSATIONS) will be again very different from these two parts (some will hate it maybe!), but it's still the TROUM-sound.

How do you approach creating new music in general? Do you always have a specific theme or concept in mind before constructing the actual sounds or does it all come together when you start recording etc.?

- Sometimes we have concepts, sometimes single ideas of the members and sometimes we are just jammin'!

There's no sense of subjugating ourselves to a certain "form of producing music"! When there's creative energy inside us, it will flow, will show up the one way or other. A process you can't force yourself to.. so Troum-pieces are created very differently.. Maybe it's right to say: there are thousand ways to get there (and they are all good), but there's one goal: the finished piece.

Some time ago, the collaboration CD with Yen Pox

was released, after having been under work for quite a long time. How did this idea for collaboration come about and why did it take so long to get it finished?

- In fact we were starting to talk about this project in 1996 - when Maëror Tri was still existing! Knowing "Blood Music", YEN POX first brilliant album, and getting friends with Steve Hall via e-mail, it was an exciting idea to get these two spheres combined: the ultra-dark, oppressive sounds of YEN POX with our more ambient & emotional or psychedelic stuff.

We needed as long as the process needed - 6 years might sound long, but a creative process doesn't care about time. Sometimes one single life isn't enough: Some creative processes begin with the ideas of ONE MAN and are then treated further by next generations - which is quite fascinating.

At the end it was Michael Hensley who cared himself a lot about the final mix - not sure how much "final mixings" he made, but there were many...this final mixing took another two years at least.

Talking about collaborations with different artists in general, how does it work for such a strongly conceptual band as Troum to collaborate with other people? Apparently the people you're collaborating with have to have a similar approach to sounds and ideas, or do they?

- No, it's even BETTER when they have a DIFFERENT concept or approach. It's interesting to see different ideas, i.e. Yen Pox who expressed more a darker view on dreams at the collaboration... we have planned many collaborations, but usually don't find the time to work on it. It's a shame shame shame.

Troum has done quite a lot of live performances. Does your live concept differ much from the recorded material? Does improvisation play any role in your performances?

- Studiomaterial is often impossible to be performed live. But live-material (studio-versions of it) is often released together with studiomaterial, it derives from it or it's mixed with it. There is indeed a lot of improvisation live. Every concert sounds different not only because of different locations but also because of different moods and vibes during the gig. We try to catch the feeling / atmosphere and play with it.

Finally, could you give us a list of forthcoming Troum releases and maybe mention some other future plans if possible?

- We are just waiting on the release of LJUBIMAYA, a 3-track 10" on the Russian label COLD LANDS (should be out very soon and was planned originally to appear at our Russian shows). In summer there should come out SIGQAN, a CD on the new established (sub label of Release Records) DESOLATION HOUSE, which is basically the studio-version of our live-programme we

played in autumn 2001. And of course the third part of TJUKURRPA: RHYTHMS AND PULSATIONS will appear this year, when we have finished the recordings and found some money. There's a compilation CD to the theme DREAM on TANTRIC HARMONIES which could be pretty interesting, with one track by Troum. And we also contributed to some other compilations, i.e. to the first vinyl-release of a new Dutch label named EVOLVED AS ONE, which could be very beautiful.

Then there are many other plans (i.e. for AMPLEXUS, SMALL VOICES, TUMULT and FORMOSAN), but no definite titles or release-dates yet.

If you wish to say anything else, here's your chance...

- "Without music life would be a mistake" (Friedrich Nietzsche). Without music life would indeed be unbearable. Music fills the black holes inside us!

www.troum.com



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(A) = Andy O'Sullivan
(DF) = Dominick Fernow
(J) = J. Mattila
(M) = Mikko A.
(R) = Richard Stevenson
(TSP) = TsinPot
(YA) = Yves Albrechts

Abugrabbann "Sugar Noise" CD

I'm starting to wonder if people actually have any idea what sort of a magazine Degenerate is when they send us their demos etc. At least Abugrabbann seem to have been pretty lost sending their "Sugar Noise" demo for a review. This Belgian act is doing some electronic music which actually is pretty hard to describe, but I'd put it somewhere between EBM, electro, techno, pop and guitar-driven 'commercial industrial rock'. The tracks are often based around quite complex drum machine loops and simple distorted guitar riffs which actually might be just guitar sounds from a synth. Occasionally there are some vocals and samples buried deep in the mix, but usually they only manage to make the whole thing more confusing. I really don't know what to say about this disc. I didn't like it, but I guess it's not complete shit either. It's nevertheless clear that Abugrabbann isn't a band that Degenerate should be covering. (J)

Contact: abugrabbann@hotmail.com

Acclimate "Precursor" CD

This was originally going to be PBK live, but for this live a 2nd member was recruited to assist, and the sound turned out extremely different than the typical PBK sound. After several live performances as a duo, PBK continued alone and the other member took the name Acclimate for his project. This first one is the supposed-to-be PBK performance, which turned out to be different and therefore is now released under the Acclimate name. The sound is taken from a live VHS, so it's not perfect, but talented mastering has done its purpose and it is entertaining to listen through the whole +50 minutes live set. Sound is often very noisy, but with details and many layers. Only shouting vocals seem quite out of place. I'm not sure if it's the audience members yelling or the artists, but while the music is very electronic and dense, the vocals sound very dry and loose. Like they would not fit in. There is very little of them anyway, so not much to complain. The live recording gives this additional powerful feeling and doesn't allow it to become too polished. Good stuff. (M)

Contact: Acclimate, P.O.Box 262, Flushing, MI 48433, USA. acclimate6@webtv.net

Afterbirth "Je n'ai pas le Raisin d'Etre" CD Box-Xero Productions

This is the first offering from this promising new harsh noise project from New Jersey, USA. Eight tracks of filthy scratchy unpleasant harsh noise utilizing loops, feedback, distortions, cut up chopping and the occasional vocal. Nothing ground breaking but there is a nasty contorting scathing undercurrent at work here which makes it stand out from most beginning noise. Occasionally there are certain electronic sounds and loops which are too obvious in how they were made. A variety of recording techniques are used including live high volume recordings as well as heavy digital editing and processing - however Afterbirth is careful never to let the editing kill the spirit or atmosphere of the noise. A dejected and negative atmosphere is created by existential themes and titles - accented by the well placed samples in "Hallways of the Mind". Minimal packaging in jewel box with tin foil and xerox inserts. Limited to 50 copies. (DF)

Contact: AAAfterbirth@aol.com

Alphonse de Montfroy "Silence" 3"CD Ad Noiseam

While the title might be a touch misleading, it does nonetheless give an indication of the intricate subtleties that this mini release encompasses. Given this is the debut release for this Ukrainian artist, 5 short(ish) pieces are showcased, and while they have an allegiance with darker forms of ambient music, they also teeter at the edge of an experimental framework (partially akin to the direction that Hazard has taken since signing to A.S.H International). Pulsations, drones, textural sounds, faint rhythms etc are explored here in a minimalist vein, focusing on subtle shifts rather than grandiose movements. Melody is also a foreign concept here (as are organic sonorities), instead the atmospheres are quite clinical and digital which gives partial recognition to the laptop experimental scene (yet I have no idea by which means these pieces have been created). Essentially representing a taster for this artist's material, it will be interesting to see how he progresses it with future releases. Oh, and this particular release is limited to only 50 copies. (R)

Contact: www.adnoiseam.net



Aluminum Noise "Manipulation" 3xCD Verato Project

One of the most positive surprises in a long time. I wasn't too fond of Aluminum Noise's more harsh noise material and was a bit sceptic about this massive three-disc release as well, but I was glad to find

out that the material here was more droning ambient than noise; and even more glad when it turned out to be excellent! Starting off on a critical note, I must say that this release doesn't bring anything unheard of into the droning ambient genre; it's all been done before, but when it's done again with such skill and vision, I have no problems enjoying it. There are two actual discs with 9 tracks all in all and a bonus disc including a recording of Aluminum Noise's live show in June, 2002. The actual discs bear quite similar material: lengthy pieces with deep droning backgrounds, some slowly sweeping sounds on top along with the clatter of some metal-like elements and bells etc. There are passages where it all goes a bit harsher with the drones distorted, but it just adds more character and interest to the whole thing. Otherwise it would be somewhat boring to listen through both discs. The live recording includes tracks from the two actual discs along with Aluminum Noise's impression of Black Sabbath's "Sweet Leaf" which is interesting to say the least. The live material is a bit more harsh and holds nice live intensity, but I still prefer the two studio discs. As a whole I must say that I really enjoy listening to this release! The discs come in a three-disc jewel box with full colour inserts. Limited edition of 60 copies. (J)

Contact: Suggestion Records, P.O.Box 1403, 58285 Gevelsberg, Germany. www.suggestion-records.de

Anenzephalia "Die Sender muessen schweigen" 10" Power & Steel

I was waiting for this with great enthusiasm. And after the great CD on Death Factory and the "New World Disorder" 12" on Tesco, I don't think this new 10" reaches the same level. It's not so far behind, but when I listened to it couple of times with lower volume, it didn't make such an impact. When played with louder volume, more depth could be found in the sounds as well as interesting details. There is less vocals than in those past two releases. Many of the same elements are still there, but the approach is a little different. A-side is humming layers of sound, slow loops, silent spoken word samples, analog synth noise and in the end a distorted cold voice. It's not aggressive shouting and fits the slow loop based background very well. B-side starts with more aggressive and heavy noise walls. High pitched analog synthesizer and really brutal rumbling distortion wall. After a few minutes it evolves into a mechanical rhythm loop combined with vibrating "howling" sounds and some additional details. The side ends with the same noise sounds that were used in the beginning. All in all a good 10", yet I still like the last CD and 12" more. (M)

Contact: Loki Foundation, Psf 241321, 04333 Leipzig, Germany. www.loki-found.de

Ativ / Radial Split 3"CD Ad Noiseam

Not being familiar with either artist, the bio tells me that both projects hail from the New York rhythmic noise scene and have collaborated on this 4 track mini EP by re-mixing 2 tracks of each others material. For me there can be rhythmic noise ("great!") and there can be rhythmic noise ("it's Ok..."). Whilst my perception of this release is leaning towards the latter, it does not mean the tracks on this release are bad, rather they do not have that certain 'something' that would enable me to declare the tracks excellent. This might sound like an apathetic statement to some, yet when listening to these tracks they neither grab me in either a positive or a negative light. Anyway in regard to the actual music, the Ativ re-mixes of Radial's material are relatively twisted, using frayed sounds injected with heavy driving beat sequences. Radial on the other hand have re-mixed Ativ's work using a more subdued undercurrent, then overlaying this with rather harsh distortion or cut up oriented beats. Notwithstanding that hearing this material performed live would give me a whole different perception of the two acts, my apathetic stance stands when listening to this material on CD. Non committal perhaps? You might have an entirely different perception. As with all of the 3"CD releases on Ad Noiseam this is limited to 100 copies. (R)

Atrax Morgue "Death-Orgasm Connector" CD Slaughter Productions

New full length from AM comes to entertain the sick minds. 10 tracks, such as "I Kill Sex (Again)", "Death-Orgasm Connector", "Inside Your Body", "I Know What You Need" represent the simple and personal style of AM we've been used to. There are some new elements, like taking vocal styles to an ultimate high pitched squeal and in general using vocals as a very dominant noise source. There are moments when nothing else happens, but a slowly whispering distorted voice. When I first started to listen this CD, I waited for the blast to begin, but surprisingly many of the tracks lack the typical strong non-stop noise background. In fact, I'd see connection to art noises here (or electro acoustic artists or whatever) who use silence as a part of the composition. That is quite rare in power electronics. Some songs are definitely too long compared to how far the actual idea can remain interesting. For example over 6 minutes of the 1st song is one half too much. Most of the tracks are c. 3 minutes, but I'd even cut those a little. In the typical AM style, songs are usually really simple. One "clean" (=no effect boxes) sound of analog synth and a distorted voice, and that's all usually. From the vocal track there might occasionally come some feedback. After 46 minutes you probably agree that there is no other band like AM. It's up to you whether you like it or not. I'm still confused. (M)

Contact: Slaughter Productions, Via Tartini 8, 41049 Sassuolo (MO), Italy. www.welcome.to/slaughter

Audible Pain "Mehrzeitiger Hirnstammfarkt" LP Reduktive Musiken

Pretty weird stuff from a new German artist. I really have a hard time describing this; it could be categorised as glitch, noise,

minimal or whatever but none of those really gives a correct description of the material. The sounds are very stripped down and usually the tracks consist of just one electronic buzzing sound just... well, buzzing around. At times it goes into loops and then again cuts and goes completely random. A few of the tracks include some noisier parts where the buzz turns into high pitched feedback and is also layered so that the sound becomes a bit more dimensional and varied. Still, it never gets noisy enough to call it noise. And the sounds aren't exactly what I'd call glitch. It's just minimalistic sound. Apparently the material has been recorded after the artist has suffered from a stroke of some sort and I guess that explains a lot. I found this release to be pretty boring, but even more confusing. Limited edition of 320 copies. (J)

Contact: Reduktive Musiken, M. Stabenow, Hein-Hoyer-Str. 36, 20359 Hamburg, Germany. www.reduktivemusiken.de

Audible Pain "Phase 4" CD Reduktive Musiken

This is the second full length work from Audible Pain and comparing it to his debut LP, this one seems to be a bit easier to access. The approach is harsher, at times even reminiscent of death industrial and noise. I believe the sounds originate mostly from analog synth abuse, possibly run through some effects and occasionally cut up. It sounds good for a while, but when we're talking about a release with over 70 minutes of playing time, it definitely gets too one dimensional and boring at some point. It sounds a bit clichéd to say that it needs samples or vocals to make it more interesting, but it sure needs something. Right now the material isn't strong enough to stand on its own. This CD is limited to 105 copies and comes in special hand painted sleeve. (J)



Axone / kNOw "Night of Deliverance" Split CD Sonnambulant Corpse Recordings

There seems to be a whole bunch of new dark ambient/death industrial acts coming from the U.S. at the moment, most of which have proven out to be quite interesting. Here is a split release with Axone and kNOw - both from whom I've only heard a few tracks prior to this disc. Axone is first with two lengthy tracks of drone-filled soundscapes which tend to evolve from silent to almost noisy and back again. The sounds are deep and new elements are introduced in slowly surfacing layers so that the listener will be kept on his toes the whole time. There are some more 'experimental' elements included as well, possibly making this a challenging listen for someone expecting the basic run-of-the-mill dark ambient here, but for me they proved to be quite refreshing and made sure that I'll be spinning these tracks in the future as well. Really good material from Axone. kNOw's first track opens with irritating bleeps and weird cut-ups of orchestras and piano, making me doubt whether I'd enjoy their material as much as Axone. The sound eventually turns towards heavy electronics -like loops and gets more coherent. Over the course of the four tracks presented here, kNOw goes through a wide range of styles and sounds; mixing them together, cutting them apart and randomly connecting them again. There are brilliant parts in each track, but for some reason the final result isn't as accomplished as it should be. kNOw definitely have their unique style and obviously a vision to what they're doing, but I guess it just isn't for me. This release comes in a DVD box with very stylish full colour artwork which is already starting to be a trademark for Sonnambulant Corpse releases. (J)

Contact: Sonnambulant Corpse Recordings, PMB201, 15127 NE 24th St., Redmond, WA 98052, USA. www.sonnambulantcorpse.com

Azoikum "Gossenfotoze" CD Spatter Productions

Like all Spatter releases, this is in a DVD case, with good full color artwork. Azoikum remains on the border of good and mediocre. I personally feel that they have previously done better than this. It's still everything that Azoikum has been - layers of electronic sounds, distorted but not so noisy after all. Usually it's echoed synth sounds sometimes with enough of distortion to justify the description power electronics, but I'd rather see it as some kind of industrial. Sure there are misogynist and sexual themes, and some loudness and painful sounds, but very dominant are the dark synthesizer sounds and even some rhythmic elements. Vocals are whispered through distortion and the same goes for the sampled voices. There isn't any dirty or so violent sounds or vocals. Those who like their power electronics "clean" and modern, Azoikum delivers it all. For my taste this is too clean to make a good impact. (M)

Contact: www.scoptophilla.com/spatter

Azure Skies "Azure Skies" CD Ant-Zen

Being a collaborative project between members of Sanctum and Metal Destruction, initially many people may have expected this to be released by CMI, but for whatever reason this has been issued via Ant-Zen (and even I must admit that it is quite different to the direction that this label has been pursuing over the last few years). At any rate such considerations are immaterial and does nothing to detract from what is essentially a great CD. Commencing with a

crusty mix of noisy rhythmic loops and sweeping orchestral atmospheres the two facets of the Azure Skies projects are revealed - on one hand nasty and gritty, whilst on the other, beautiful and forlorn ('rhythmic, orchestral industrial noise' perhaps?). Chopping between these sounds and including a hefty wack of metallic percussion, the mid paced flow of "Crater" bodes very well for a solid release. Even more roughly hewn, "Deniability" built on static lurching loops, dense rumbling elements and random noise crawls through a myriad of sections occasionally converging into some hyper rhythmic parts. Being calmer in volume, the weaving noise loops of "Hydrazine" are initially offset by a fleeting piano tune that gradually fades into the recesses of the track only to make a reappearance late composition. As for the nasty rhythmic industrial side of Azure Skies, this is displayed in full force on "Collapse" with processed vocals cyclic mid paced loops, sporadically blasting searing noise for good measure (and if this were pushed up a notch or two it could have qualified as a power electronics track). Alternately "Bring Nothing Back" contains a brooding orchestral melody that sounds particularly "Sanctum-esque", except for the ridged and rhythmic percussion setting it apart, only for the heavy rasping/shouted vocals to beg a comparison the vocal deliveries of Mental Destruction. Presenting the most freeform piece of the CD, "Still" is a wavering and meandering industrial noise piece, whilst "Forward Contamination" is initially deceptive in its dark ambient tone, only to evolve into a superb pounding rhythmic offering. All in all a damn fine CD and a positive result to the cross pollination of skill and ideals of members of two known and respected projects. (R)

Contact: www.ant-zen.com



Bad Sector "Ampos" CD Power & Steel

Bad Sector are a project that should need no introduction, but if they do "Ampos" is a fine place to start. Forming a re-release of an older album, this was originally released in 1995 on God Factory, however two bonus tracks that originate from the same recording period are tacked on the end for good measure. Likewise the album packaging has been re-evaluated, with the re-designed digipack being rather resplendent in complementing both the sound of the group and the overall aesthetic of the label. As for the music, straight off it has the unmistakable sound of Bad Sector (if you have heard it before), and if not it is a sound that blends sound experimentalism with dark ambient textures. Yet in their pursuit of musical brilliance Bad Sector manage to avoid the stuffy intellectual aspects of academic sound exploration whilst similarly avoiding the clichés that can be present within the dark ambient scene. And the result I hear you ask? - none other than a musical palette of cosmic spatial breadth, combined with a hint of a science fiction type resonance, all evoked via the flowing and shimmering sound structures. Across the thirteen compositions, the album retains continuity and focus, yet each individual track chooses to explore the subtleties of the slow morphing rhythms and swelling harmonic tunes. Thus from the outset each track is impressive as it weaves its own caustic undercurrent whilst intermixing clinical blips, slow morphing melodious textures and alien-esque voices. To conclude, little if any more needs to be said in way of praise of both this album and Bad Sector as an artist, given I can only offer up the highest of praise in respect of both. (R)

Barfly / Perkust "Trashbang" CDR Hammasratas

Barfly is like leaving your computer program to loop one 20 second electronic noise fragment for 37 minutes. When there are changes, they happen between 2-5 minutes and after that the sound remains one dimensional and totally static until the next change. They could have edited 5 good minutes from this, but 37 minutes... Well, I'd say it's a waste of time. Perkust presents 3 long tracks which give you cheap computer effect style of iron junk abuse. It has some good moments, but not much. I think Perkust have done some better material too. I'd recommend to forget the cheap multi-effect and toy programs of computer and start from the basics - create noise with original sounds and a tape recorder. (M)

Contact: T. Kandelin, Pikkitie 2 C 27, 90550 Oulu, Finland. lihmaster@hotmail.com

Barrikad "Here We Come" CDR Freak Animal Records

A trumpet fanfare starts this CDR by Barrikad followed by a voice telling of the incongruity in today's society and declaring a war on it. This is followed by a noisy muddy rhythm and a background drone and the voice returns in the same argumentative manner declaring a dream of a future society. The second track features an archive sample of a Swedish politician (I think) telling of his own memories of May the 1st from his childhood. This is followed by a short waltz sample before a dark throbbing darkness sets in and a Swede telling about his reluctance to accept violence during demonstrations. The dark throbbing keeps going and shifts to a watery sound at the end. Third track opening with a sample of "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" and is quite laid back. Next track starts directly at the peak with a nice bassy throbbing wall of sounds and a voice repeating "immediately discharged" or "destroyed", anyway a really good track. I must just comment the last track that is some dude with a banjo singing a song about all the benefits of joining the Union for the final 3 minutes. Actually this is quite a competent release with a lot of good ideas and Barrikad is a project with potential. I think that this is genuine left wing politics they display in this release. The 8-page foldable booklet is full of pictures and texts about modern Marxism, civil disobedience and violent demonstrations. Not caring a lot about politics myself I am even so very amused of the samples in Swedish used and I would

have wanted even more of them. Sadly the playing time of this is less than 20 minutes if you exclude the banjo dude and it is really too short to get really into Barrikad. I am eagerly awaiting the next release and hoping that they will do some material about the happenings in Göteborg during the European Union meeting. (TSP)

Contact: Freak Animal Records, P.O.Box 21, 15141 Lahti, Finland. www.cfprod.com/ta

Bastard Noise / L'Idiot du Village Split 7"

Broken Brains Records

Bastard Noise does a lot again. Barely had time to listen to their latest when a new one is being released. This one is Wood & Wiese doing one track of close to ambient electronics with some harsh noise sounds. For example in this and maybe the rather recent split 7" with Gerrit, BN sounds like a hi-fi version of old Consumer Electronics. It's mostly high pitched electronics, but not so "noisy". L'Idiot du Village is from France and does cut-up noise. Sometimes harsh, sometimes with funny or strange moments of spoken word or other sounds. Changes are fast and drastic. Limited 300 copies, white vinyl and thin glossy covers. (M)

Bastard Noise "Skull Report" 7" No Fucking Labels

I got a special edition of 42 copies in handmade covers. I haven't seen what the normal edition looks like, but this is nice. And what makes this essential is the fact that this must be the best Bastard Noise 7" done in the recent years - if not in their whole career! Extremely good and brutal roaring voice over the strong droning noise background. It's complex and detailed with additions of harsh noise bursts. This beats the shit out of all the BN 7"s that have been done during the last couple of years. (M)

Contact: nkcsmd@hotmail.com



Bastard Noise "Descent to Mimas" CD Ground Fault Recordings

Wood and Wiese come back with my favorite BN release. This is a concept album based on life on the distant moons of Jupiter (?). I am reminded of the opening sequence of Wagner's Das Rheine Gold with the long looping soundscape that open into harsh noise fluctuations. Outer space may just be a metaphor for inner space but this release takes you deep into the lunar ice and one is confronted by the chilling noise and haunting ambience I really think Bastard Noise has upped the ante on this release. The combination of home made electronics, computers and Wood's mind create an amazing sonic journey. I wish more noise bands put this much thought into the execution of noise. I was reminded of Wagner, Voivod, Jung, Hawkwind and Erich Fromme with this amazing collection of sound. Buy two. (A)

Contact: Ground Fault Recordings, P.O.Box 4923, Downey, CA 90241, USA. www.groundfaultrecordings.com

Big City Orchestra "New Beat for Baby" CDR Negative Foundation

This U.S. act has been going on for ages now, but they've always remained a bit unknown even though - at least judging by the odd 5 or so releases I've heard - their material would definitely deserve much more attention. Here is a very nice CDR released on the Finnish Negative Foundation (run by Juri of Mmem) label who apparently will be ending all activity after this release. "New Beat for Baby" must be the closest thing to my idea of experimental industrial ambient I've heard in a long, long time. Incredibly organic, a bit unpolished sound filled with rhythmic loops, hypnotising drones, voices, concrete sounds etc.; all structured and assembled into pieces which sometimes build from nothing into massive textures of amazing sounds and on the other hand may repeat the same layers of loops for 10 minutes. Either way the result is always excellent! This goes for the first 6 tracks on the disc. The remaining 41 tracks are short sample sketches taken from documentaries, movies, porn films etc. These are a part of Big City Orchestra's sound library series, so a similar section can be found at the end of several other B.C.O. CDs as well. Some of the samples are pretty funny or interesting, but still I would've preferred this disc to be without them. Anyway, it's easy to just

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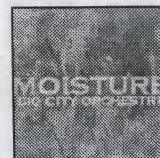
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program the CD player to play the first 6 tracks if you want and the material on those tracks is certainly worth the trouble! This CDR comes with an on-body label and professionally printed sleeve, so it's definitely an item not to miss. (J)

Contact: J.M. Joensuu, Tellervonk. 18 alak., 40200 Jyväskylä, Finland.



Big City Orchestra "Moisture" CDR Reduktive Musiken

Another excellent Big City Orchestra release in a short period of time. This time the material is based on live recordings done in Germany and The Netherlands in 2001. I think this is the darkest and most straight-forward droning ambient I've heard from this act, but still it captures the innovative and interesting aspects of their other works. The tracks are just dense textures of sonorous drones, loops, voices, etc. It's pretty hard to describe the contents of the tracks, but still they are incredibly effective. I'd choose this anytime over pretentious state-of-the-art synth generated ambient. As it is often the case with Big City Orchestra releases, the disc ends with short tracks including field recordings and other concrete sound effects from the band's trip to Europe in 2001. The CDR comes on a clear digipak tray packaged in a special brown cardboard box with full colour stickers. Limited edition of 150 copies. (J)

Black Leather Jesus "Trokar" 3" CDR Sewer Records

One 19 minute noise track presenting the best BLJ recording I have heard in a long time! Totally awesome noise created with the new line-up, featuring Richard Ramirez, Kevin Novak and Jovan Hernandez. There is some smooth sounds on the background, but intense and extreme noise on top. They succeed in combining some new elements to the BLJ sound, but keep the intensity in maximum. Limited edition of 50 copies seems like mistake. And from the label this is already sold out, so keep your eyes on some distributors. This should have been at least 200. Possibly a real CD of 500 copies. I hope BLJ keep up the quality and create more stuff like this. (M)

Contact: www.drink.to/sewerrecords

BlankBanner "Blank" CDR World Nihil

BlankBanner is a new project of the guy known from B.L.O. and Iron Youth, which didn't get too good reviews in past issues. Well, I can say he has improved. No more such crappy clichés as in the past, but decent noise in artistic cover. The name is influenced by

The Haters records, but they don't sound like Haters. What could I say more? Harsh noise, with different sources of sound. (M)
Contact: World Nihil, M. Mutzlitz, Hinter dem Hod 21, 64521 Gross-Gerau, Germany.

BlankBanner "One Day I Was So Sad, that Everything Became Meaningless" CD
World Nihil

Comes in slightly "punk" covers (cut and paste lay-out with words made of newspaper clipped letters). It offers quite nihilistic track titles like "The Idea of No Ideas", "Broken Value", "Empty", "No New Aesthetics", "Destruct", "Nowhere", etc. The noise starts very promising in the first track, combining electronics and dry junk metal sounds together in a very satisfying way. The 2nd track is more straightforward and simple. The 3rd gets silent sound arts of electric humming and dripping liquids. The 4th and the 5th are quite lame noise tracks, c. 3 min each. The 6th returns in a better way with electronic sounds, strange sequencer "melody", probably distant vocal loop, etc. Very good final result, unusual but still noise! Same goes for the 7th track. The sound is nearly opposite. Less bass, with good electronic sounds on loops and other general chaos. The last track is close to somebody attempting to do a modern version of old Consumer Electronics tracks. Decent work. With a couple of exceptions, this CD holds inside inventive and good noise. Good stuff to check out. (M)



Bloodyminded "True Crime" CD
BloodLust!

Would you imagine a positive review of Bloodyminded from Degenerate magazine? I guess those who remember some comments on their earlier works in some issues of either Degenerate or Freak Animal, remember that I have not always been that big a fan of Mr. Solotroff's work. But besides the fact that I have had a strange desire to listen to his old material once in a while, this new one totally blew me away with its superiority compared to any Bloodyminded recordings! Up to date my favorite Solotroff work was his solo project Surgical Stainless Steel 7", but now with the new Bloodyminded CD he + other members manage to impress more. I know there might be a cult following for his works, but even more guys who have found them all merely silly/funny. I'd recommend to give this a listen even if you didn't like the early stuff. "True Crime" is loaded with multiple vocal styles of Solotroff himself and numerous guest vocalists. Instead of one-dimensional "helicopter noise" known from the previous CD, this one has always several layers of great analog synthesizer sounds, feedback and noise. Some are very low sub bass, some very high pitched. When different types of noises and even 3 different vocals go simultaneously I can say that I've never heard power electronics done like this. Bloodyminded has their original

sound, even if it's created with contributions of many noise artists and vocalists (Aube, Deathpile, Sshe Retina Stimulants, Jugula-Thor, Xavier Laradjil, Slogun). There is no more short songs and the lyrics have also improved. One thing that remains the same is the clean vocals. I personally like distortion or extensive echo on vocals, but on this CD the clean vocals fit the strange atmosphere. Includes a bonus video which you can view on a PC. (M)
Contact: BloodLust!, P.O.Box 6091, Chicago, IL 60680-6091, USA. bloodlust.blogspot.com

Boyd Rice and Friends "Music, Martinis & Misanthropy" CD
NER/Tesco Distribution

Being a reissue of a classic release, the original artwork has been expanded with new digipack format (beautiful gloss card, silver foil print and de-bossed details), and new images within the 12 page gloss booklet. Under the 'Boyd Rice and Friends' monicker it combines the collaborative input of luminaries such as Douglas P. Rose McDowall, Michael Moynihan, Tony Wakeford and Bob Ferbrache, and in the process created a musically diverse album. However being more than merely music alone, the lyrical content plays a major, if not the central role given its scathing indictment of the modern human condition (but more often than not this is done via misanthropic humorous witticisms). A pinnacle highlight comes in the form of the absolute classic song "People" - a hauntingly beautiful (jangly) acoustic track, where the lyrics have been increasingly validated by the passing of each year (listen and ye shall understand). "Disneyland Can Wait" is another amazing cut of sparse acoustic guitars, floating female vocals and calm and forlorn spoken vocals of Boyd (...lets take a ride on Mr Toad's Wild Ride shall we?). But what of the other tracks you ask? Well, they encompass orchestral/sound collages ("Invocation" and "An Eye For and Eye", "Shadows of the Night"), spoken word/narrative pieces ("The Hunter", "Nightwatch", "Tripped a Beauteous Maiden", "History Lesson" and "Silence is Golden") and acoustic guitar based songs ("Down in the Willow Garden", "I'd Rather Be Your Enemy" and "As for the Fools"). Additionally one last bonus track is enclosed, being an interesting piece that seems to have been contributed by recent Boyd associate Ms Tracy Twyman. As for this unnamed track, it is a rather nice piece of conspiracy type humour that implies Boyd Rice was responsible for the Columbine High School shootings. Subversive indeed! Overall this is one a wild romping musical and socio-political ride that has not aged one iota in the 13 years that has transpired since its original release. Music, Martinis and Misanthropy? - a musical, mandatory, masterpiece! (R)

Contact: Tesco Organisation, P.O.Box 410118, 68275 Mannheim, Germany. www.tesco-germany.com

Ca\$etteboy "Festive Christmas" mCD
Barry's Bootlegs

Ca\$etteboy is all about copyright violation, comparable to Negativland and The Tape-Beats but not political minded and with an emphasis on funny collages. As the title already says the theme on this 16 min. and 35 sec. disc is Christmas. The first track is a collage of the word "Christmas" ripped off from several songs about Christmas, performed by mostly well-known artists (or poor excuses for artists since also Wham! and Chris Rea and even Cliff Richard are ripped off on this disc). The whole is pasted together and there is even a little bit noise to be heard but only in the first

track. The thing I enjoyed most on this mCD is the lyrics from songs that have been cutted and pasted to a new whole, for example: "And Santa Claus/he's/got/a/big/fat/dick" etc. and "Christmas is a time for/deceiving". Perhaps a bit childish and a dated technique but at it's best it's darn funny. Some tracks are annoying, uninspired abuse of mainstream music. A thing that should have been avoided is the rap track with the vocals of a certain Tony D'Money. It sounds too much like a real song for my sensitive taste. The disc is suitable for parties to make the crowd laugh or to put your glass of beer on it if you don't like it. (YA)
Contact: barrysbootlegs@hotmail.com



Changes "Fire of Life" CD
Hau Ruck/Tesco Distribution

This CD was first released on Storm Records in the mid to late 1990s, after Michael Moynihan encouraged one original member (Robert Taylor) to dig up archival recordings from this duo (Nicholas Tesluk being the other member). Likewise the recordings that make up "Fire of Life" have been derived for a variety of source tapes dating from 1969-1974, and had never been officially released before the original Storm Records pressing. However thanks to Michael Moynihan's sincere interest in encouraging this music to be heard by a new generation, the original release has become rather infamous, despite being well out for print (therefore this re-release is much welcomed news for those who may never have otherwise been able to track down a copy). As for the music this is apocalyptic folk music in a truest form, created in a time well before any such term was first coined. Primarily based around an acoustic guitar and male vocals (one track augmented with flute and female vocals), there is a simplicity at play that allows the inherent beauty and strength of the tracks to shine. Some tracks have been limited by the condition of the original source tapes, however when taking this into consideration, this does not take away any of power and conviction of these 11 tracks. Highlights of the CD would include the title track, "Satanic Hymn #2", "The Stranger in the Mirror (Pt. 3)" and "Twilight of the West". Overall this Changes CD represents timeless music that is as much relevant today as when it was originally written. (R)

Circadian "Termite on the Surgeon's Shoulder" Card CD
PACrec

Looking at the contact e-mail, I can assume this is a project with a member of Nothing. Equally unknown to me. Circadian presents rhythmic analog synth loops, strange electronic noises and fragments of experimental dark ambient. Very good and innovative stuff. You don't really know what's coming next. I assume 55 copies are gone by now, but keep your eye on the label. (M)

Contact: www.iheartnoise.com/pacrec

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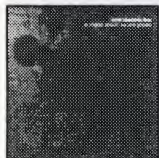
**Circuit Wound "Cockroaches and Dried Bones" Card CDr
PACrec**

After listening today to a couple of CD's of Sewer Election and other harsh noisers, it seems like Circuit Wound can't capture much attention with this 5 minute blast. The noise is decent, but falls a little below average projects. I have no idea what else they have done or who they are. I'd assume it's a side project. Distorted blurry harsh noise. Could be a project that does a few releases and then disappears? (M)

**Cleanse "Moment of Haste" 3"CDr
Chondritic Sound**

A limited edition of 13 copies might seem like too little to even officially release, but maybe it has a reason. Here we have 18 and a half minute live recording from September 2002 with improvised synths, rhythms, vocals + effects. Simple rhythm and synth keep it well together, and hysterical screaming vocals sound good too. The 1st track keeps going for 5 minutes. For each of the next 4 tracks they add something new. There are low rhythms, but mostly this is violent power electronics. I think the problem for me is the very very clean sound that makes it sound less powerful. If this would be dirty sounding, it would kill. I assume it's recorded from the mixer. Before I noticed that this is a live performance, I thought it could be recorded digitally on a computer. More brutal bass, muddy analog sound and I'd say this is ready for a full LP. Now there is bass and crisp high end, but not that much of middle sounds which create the "muddy" feeling. Cleanse promises a lot. I wait for the next assault!! (M)

Contact: Chondritic Sound, P.O.Box 20587, Ferndale, MI 48220, USA.



**Cold Electric Fire "In Nights Dream We Are Ghosts" CD
Cronic Mind**

The title of this album made me wonder if Cold Electric Fire was just another cheesy U.S. darkwave act, but luckily it proved out to be something totally different. I believe this is Cold Electric Fire's second release; the first being a limited edition CDr, this CD is probably the first time most people hear from them. The material is nicely varied with all kinds of sound source, field and object recordings mutated into quite obscure dark ambient soundscapes which at times combine into actual melodies and very minimalist musical passages. The more melodic elements I could have easily done without, since the more 'inhuman' sounds are so excellent here, consisting of manipulated sounds originating from traditional instruments (e.g. piano, cymbals, violin, guitar), field recordings from construction sites and railroads as well as object recordings of metal junk, lamps etc. The soundscapes evolve slowly, creating a very chilling and ominous atmosphere. Naturally, everything might sound fuller and more refined if some hi-tech equipment and synths were used to create the material, but I'm glad they weren't. This is exactly the kind of experimentation that I enjoy, especially when it's made into great quality dark ambient. The references to drugs in some track titles ("The Last Time My Needle Kissed the Spoon", "The Moon Makes these White Horses Shine") felt a bit stupid or even pretentious for my taste, but then again, they have nothing to do with the sounds anyway, so I can easily disregard them and just enjoy the contents of the CD. (J)

Contact: Cronic Mind, PMB 105, 4644 Geary Blvd., San Francisco, CA 94118, USA. www.cronicmind.org

**Column One "The Audience is Sleeping..." 2D
90% Wasser/Moloko+**

Column One have definitely come a long way from the times when their material could somehow be connected with the industrial genre, even though they've always had a strong sense of experimentalism in them. "The Audience is Sleeping..." has lots more connections to the glitch and electronica genres than industrial, but I'd say this beats most Mego releases etc. any day. Here the bleeps, clicks and cuts take on a more musical form, sounding perhaps less challenging than usual, but still a lot more enjoyable to listen. Of course, there is a LOT of stuff on this CD that I don't like and this surely isn't something I listen to every day nor every month for that matter, but it's still good. Also, the fact that Column One have sampled the voice of Björk on their track "Foulé" prevents me from saying anything too bad about this release. If you're familiar with Column One's new sound and like it, get this CD. Otherwise you probably should avoid it. (J)

Contact: www.90-prozent-wasser.de

**Combat Astronomy "Lunik" CDr
Ad Noiseam**

Stunningly designed oversized DVD packing for this 100 limited release, this CDr represents the debut full length for Combat Astronomy following on from a split CD with Sleeping with the Earth (released on Troniks in 2000). Remembering not being entirely convinced with Combat Astronomy material on the split CD, I was actually quite flawed by the eclectic and rather playful tracks that make up this release. Not really sounding like any particular group (other than Combat Astronomy of course) a barrage of quirky loops, noise segments and technoid styled tribal beats combine to assault the listener in a very appealing style. With a loose direction the album uses a variety of cut ups and interlude segments (even within tracks), yet still managing to remain focused. Track "Scene of Zealot" is a great composition of broken, clanging beats undercut with sweeping noise and spacious sound that flows into the even more hyper and twisted track "Memories" (psychotic tribal beats and disorientating noise). The track "Illusions" is likewise rather deranged due to it chopping and changing between a throbbing mass of sound, to some over the top fractured beats, mixed again with a good dose of noise. The bizarrely titled "Cure of Zombie" is just as bizarre musically with an epileptic type beat overlaid with a nice partially harmonic

drone and programming (only to add further beat sections as it progresses). With the resonance of a heavily treated and upwardly spiraling guitar riff at the start of "Konat", quickly a variety of percussive sequences and random noise and static converge into a pleasing coagulated sound mass. Moving in a cyclic manner, the albums finally arcs full circle by concluding with short reworkings of opening tracks 1 & 2. Eclectically diverse and highly original, Combat Astronomy have produced an album is a very enjoyable and refreshing listen, but I think is slightly unfortunate that it is limited to only 100 copies given it deserves wider attention. (R)

**Concrete Violin "Force Fed" CDr
Lazy Squid**

Coming from Houston and carrying the torch for the second wave of that city's noise makers comes Austin Caustic. This CDr release runs the gauntlet from early power electronics with lots of loops to dense sound collages then twists into something like early Scorn then back to noise. Thick analog sounds develop over time and a lot of sonic ground is covered. Some of the tracks seem to need a little finishing but all in all a great release by a great new noise performer. (A)

Contact: lazysquid@juno.com



**Con-Dom / Militia "Scorched Earth Policy" CD
Old Europa Cafe**

I gladly welcome this re-release of the tape! It was done years ago by Old Europa Cafe, and hasn't been available for a long time. I'm too lazy to dig out the tape from a storage box of special packaged tapes, so I can't say if there would be exact dates of the recordings. I assume it was about 10 years ago. Con-Dom presents here his typical "tape noise" that he did in the 80's. Lo-fi distorted sound with heavy use of fast flanger/phaser. There is a little of vocals and some tracks include samples from movies. There isn't much of bass sound, neither today's crisp high end but it creates the atmosphere I like in Con-Dom. Very uncompromising sound that he keeps doing still today. Militia is almost at their best here. Some of the tracks were used later on their 3xLP set and included are also some live versions of tracks of which the studio versions appeared on other records. The style and atmosphere is the same as on the 3LP set and the contribution to War Against Society. Those two are my favorite industrial records. Even if all of the tracks do not deal with the subject, it gives me such feelings of old European history that no other industrial records have managed to create. I wish Militia could be able to return to their roots as all of their new material has not reached the same atmosphere as these early recordings. (M)

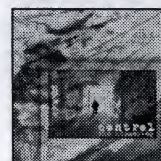
Contact: Old Europa Cafe, Via le Marconi 38, 33170 Pordenone, Italy. www.come.to/old.europa.cafe

**Contagious Orgasm "Flow of Sound Without Parameter" CD
Ground Fault Recordings**

Another series II release by Ground Fault. This release shows Hashimoto and Sugirua moving further away from noise and making the leap into early 70's German Progressive Rock. Found sounds, beats and snatches of music converge into a mix of amazing sounds. One of Ground Fault's best and my favorite Contagious Orgasm. (A)

**Control "Filth" Card CDr
PACrec**

Heavy and thick power electronics/death industrial that follows along the same lines presented on Control's "Algalagnia" CD. Complex and detailed wall of sound with highly effected logical voice on top. Definitely at the top of U.S. power electronics scene. Even though staying faithful to the genre, I hear originality in the creation of this song. It's not the most typical kind of stuff that you hear these days. Only 55 copies done so I expect this to be sold out by now. (M)



**Control "The Cleansing" 3"CDr
Frozen Empire Media**

Not much to say after the "Filth" CDr. Here's 4 tracks, somewhere between death industrial and power electronics, with very good structure and amazing details. The sound is not soft, but not really that painful either. It's more dark than violent. I don't know where Control will continue from this. The difference between the first album and these more recent works is huge and if there is something to improve, I can't really tell what it would be. Occasional louder vocals? (M)

Contact: www.frozenempiremedia.com

**Converter / Asche / Morgenstern "Erode" CD
Ant-Zen**

Three way collaboration by three of the well known artists on the Ant-Zen roster has created a rather eclectic release spanning tense ambience, rhythmic noise and death industrial genres. Static swirling textures and a tongue in cheek sample commences the CD (referencing the label name), with the piece gradually morphing towards a mid paced rhythmic industrial groove. A whiplashing beat oriented affair on track two too has a heavy Converter stamp

on the sound - if not just a touch quirrier than normal which has much also to do with the use of another humorous sample. Another industrial dance floor oriented track is toyed with again on track three, whereby direction is forged with beat and rhythm as opposed to tune. Morgenstern comes to mind on the fourth piece where slow rising organic textures eventually combine with mid paced modulating distortion to create a cavernous yet tense edge, whilst pulsing programming, distorted death industrial vocals, and amply static noise is the recipe for the fifth piece. Track seven is another fine mixture of a death industrial undercurrent, overlaid with a rhythmic noise framework and distorted vocals in order to create another complex piece that is clearly far from being one dimensional. On the other hand the ninth and final track is a fantastic piece of tense cavernous ambience, intermixed with metallic clatter, vocal samples and death industrial programming. Intense does not begin to describe this, with it being quite reminiscent of the sound approached on Morgenstern's "Zyklen" CD. Overall I feel that fans of the general 'sound' of these three Ant-Zen artists should not be disappointed with this collaborative effort. (R)

**Cordell Klier "Apparitions" CD
Ad Noiseam**

I was waiting to hear some all-out dark ambient on this release, but instead I found some very glitchy stuff with a very minimal ambient approach. This was pretty much a disappointment for me as for some reason I can't get around to enjoying those sharp digital clicks and bleeps. The ambient soundscapes are kept really far in the background and the sharp digital sounds are popping and echoing around in the surface. I must admit that this isn't the worst I've heard in this genre and that I actually found the atmosphere rather soothing at certain parts, but unfortunately those weren't enough to make me enjoy this disc. Definitely one for the more 'contemporary electronics' oriented. (J)

**Cornucopia "032102 - Live in Detroit" CDr
Chondritic Sound**

22 minutes, and much less noisier than the 7" I got in the past. Ambient created from field records. It's quite minimal, echoing sounds of "noise". That's the way I like ambient - if you still want to call it that. No keyboards or melodies, but sounds done with creativity. It never goes to brutal noise, but maybe little noisier than keyboard ambient fans can handle. In the end you can hear the audience reaction, which doesn't sound like no more than a "crowd" of 2 people. At least the CDr ends up to the hands of 47 people. (M)

**C.O.T.A "Marches and Meditations" CD
Sonick Sorcery/Tesco Distribution**

This is my first introduction to the group, however I can't say that the rather amateurishly designed (and almost cheesy) digipack did much to inspire confidence. Anyway, as for the music, what we have here is five lengthy tracks with a little over an hour total playing time. Blending manipulated programmed elements and tribal styled influence, "Mahayuga" set proceedings in motion with a wailing horn and scattered rhythmic electronics. With the tribal oriented focus, repetition is utilised quite heavily by choosing to morph each track gradually and blending layers of noise, vocalisations, distortion, sampled voices, programmed sounds, tribal percussion etc, likewise using an ebb/flow, rising/falling technique. The sound between each track generally follows a broad and loose framework, yet uses different techniques and patterns to generate differing results per composition. However, it is due to the slow pace and length of tracks that proceedings sometimes become a little self indulgent and loose focus, thus destroying any mood evoked (five minutes worth of little more then manipulated swirling wind textures at the start of "Deep Within the Womb of the Mother Part 03" is exactly case in point). Whilst not entirely awful, there however are many other CDs that I would prefer to listen to, thus I would say that this is a release that will not be receiving multiple rotations on my system. (R)

**Dawn Projekt "Grey September" CD
L.White Records**

Using the WTC 11.09.2001 terrorist attacks as a theme for tracks and entire records seems to be getting more and more popular, and I guess that could be expected. Dawn Projekt is a new German dark ambient/industrial outfit whose debut CD deals with the aforementioned subject. Well, if it wasn't for the sleeve artwork and the few spoken samples, I guess there would be no way of knowing what the theme was. The actual sound material here is pretty basic dark ambient with layers of deep, low end synth humming combined with some looping sounds, samples and occasional rhythms which justify the use of the term 'industrial'. There's also some occasional use of male and female voices, often mixed quite deep in the sound layers. Everything here is created with skill and it's never really boring or anything, but somehow it lacks something to truly capture the listener. The whole thing just leaves me cold for some reason. I mean, the track "Brightness and Shadows" is really excellent in terms of the sound elements used and the structure, but still it leaves me with nothing. So, I really don't know what to say about this. The CD comes in a limited edition of 500 copies packaged in a full colour A5 sleeve. If you're looking for professional dark ambient and don't necessarily demand absolute uniqueness or anything too inventive from it, you might want to check Dawn Projekt out. (J)

Contact: www.lwhite-records.de

**DCLXVI "Nails" CDr
Oubliette Records**

DCLXVI is a harsh noise/experimental project from the U.S., apparently with an aim to make the harshest digital noise possible. Well, listening to this disc, harsh definitely is the word that comes to mind, and much to my surprise this turned out to be some of the best digital harsh noise I've heard so far. The entire spectrum of sounds has been used efficiently, from low rumbling noises to the highest feedback whistles imaginable, and everything in between. Nonetheless, the wall of noise has been stacked up to the limit and since it hardly changes during the tracks, it all becomes pretty boring after a while. Sure, it's really intense, harsh and violent, and like I said, some of the best digital harsh noise I've heard, but when the noise comes on full blast the whole time

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Navicon Torture Technologies :: Church of Dead Girls 2xCD :: TumorCD18

Yet another cathartic step down the darkened evolutionary path. Combining the volatile, highly charged delirium of power electronics with the claustrophobically heavy atmospheres of dark ambient. The Church of Dead Girls is a darker and more disturbing work than any previous N.T. release, but is nevertheless rife with the brutal honesty. A document of crushed emotional states and savage impulses, The Church of Dead Girls asks the listener to face their own worst thoughts and feelings. Spanning more than two hours of sonic self-evisceration. Packaged in a unique hi-rise digipak (Malignant) \$14.00ppd



Militia :: Eco-Anarchic Manifesto Book/CD :: TumorCD19

A guide book to the world of anarchism linked to the ecological vision of Militia, with a live companion CD of 'The Black Flag Hoisted' recorded at the 2000 Deadly Actions Festival. Musically, the live dynamic adds a raw edge, crossing over between post industrial soundscapes, tape loops and the percussive percussion from oil barrels, large metal plates, tubes suspended on chains, a full metal radiator, empty gas tanks, condensed steam and timpani, wind instruments, and a cement mixer in conjunction with our comrades at Tactical (Malignant/Tactical) \$14.00ppd

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A delirious racket delivered with precision and control and with the iron willed determination of a Swedish maniac. A cattle prod jolt to the system, leaving in it's wake a distinct burning sensation followed by the dull roar of frazzled nerve endings. There are no subtleties, no ambient interludes, just a twisted mass of metal and chaos screaming at the top of it's lungs. (Black Plague) \$12.00ppd

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without too much dynamics or diversity, the effect is quite numbing and tiresome towards the end. In a way, I can relate to the thought of making the harshest sounds possible, but there are only a few cases where going totally over-the-top has actually been successful, and this isn't one of them. Anyway, for those wanting to hear some of the better digital harsh noise, perhaps you'd like to check this disc out. It comes in a really nice metal box and appears to be ridiculously limited to 20 copies, but might still be available anyway. (J)

Contact: www.oublietterecords.com

DCLXVI "Sleep Deprivation" CDr

Another CDr release from the Montana based DCLXVI. I'm not sure if this was released before or after the "Nails" disc, but in terms of style it seems quite similar. 9 tracks of really intense and harsh digital noise which compared to "Nails" is at least a bit more dynamic and not so over-the-top all the time, thus making it a lot more interesting to listen. The structures have lots of twists and turns instead of being on full blast the whole time, and the effect is a lot stronger. Also, besides the computer generated noise, there are some tracks (or at least one track) which seem to be done just with vocal noise, and although I usually find vocal noise pretty stupid sounding on its own, here it's been forced through so many effects that it sounds pretty much like any electronics noise. The tracks don't differ too much from each other, but still contain enough diversity that they don't get as boring as on "Nails". Still, I'd have to say this is pretty basic digital harsh noise; not bad, but nothing I can get too excited about either. The whole CDr apparently is also available via DCLXVI's page on mp3.com, so everyone interested in downloading stuff from the internet can do so or just contact the band for a CDr version. (J)

Dead Husbands "We Control Tomorrow" CD Dead Mind Productions

Some people refer to this kind of material as noise. But I don't think it is. It's just goofy experimental music. Strange sounds, like toys playing techno music. Sometimes noisier loops and occasional harsh sounds have been thrown into the mess, but that doesn't make it noise. Those noise sounds serve merely the purpose of effect. Dead Husbands is so far away from my kind of music/noise that it's hard to listen to. Humor music rarely captures my attention and even though I must say this is very well done and all loops and sounds carefully adjusted to right places, it doesn't satisfy me. (M)

Contact: www.blutzeit.nl

Death in June "NADA!" CD NER/Tesco Distribution

The DJ re-release juggernaut is finally kicking into full swing, now that the long drawn out saga with WSD has reached a conclusion (with "Nada!" being the first re-press post court case). As with the other items re-released thus far, this is similarly housed in superb packaging, consisting of gloss digi-pack with debossed detail and 16 page gloss booklet containing previously unseen images lifted from the original photo shoots. And whilst mentioning additional material, alongside the "Nada!" tracks, the "Born Again" 12" has been included as a bonus. Harking back to 18 years prior, the year was 1985

when DJ were recently reduced to a duo, with Patrick Leagas and Douglas continuing the legacy after the departure of Tony Wakeford (although this recording does feature the input of Richard Butler and David Tibet). Containing some hallmarks of the neo-folk scene (that would become the focus of later DJ releases), "Nada!" intermixes the acoustic guitars, understated vocals and military percussion alongside other more synthetic, electronic and programmed tracks (eg: "The Calling (MK II)", "Carousel", "The Torture Garden" and "Born Again"). Whilst the later described tracks will potentially catch a few newer fans by surprise, when viewing such material in context, it is a sound influence that somewhat aligned itself with the new-wave sound of the time. And whilst it could be said that the sound has dated on some pieces, these compositions are nonetheless an integral part of the progression of Death in June overall sound. Alternately "Nada!" is also the album that contains the well known, if not classic tracks "Leper Lord", "Behind the Rose (Fields of Rape)" and "C'est Un Rêve", which have all become staple features of Death in June's live performances over recent years. The re-released version "Nada!" is a CD well worth of you time, containing classic tracks and acting as another integral paving stone in the continuing legacy of Death in June. (R)

Dense Vision Shrine "Magic & Mystery" CD Iris Light Records

Dense Vision Shrine is a project of Karsten Hamre, more known for his work with Penitent. As I haven't heard the last few Penitent releases I can't say how this compares to them, but I'm guessing it's fairly similar atmospheric synth music with traces of darkwave and dark ambient. I must admit that I grew tired of this style some years ago already and Dense Vision Shrine pretty much just reminded me of the reasons why. The music is based around dark, brooding strings and pianos with some less identifiable sounds here and there, giving the whole thing a very melancholic and mysterious atmosphere. Maybe it would work as background music for reading some esoteric literature or something, but I personally don't get much out of this just by listening. The CD comes with video clips for the tracks "Snowsand" and "The Stronghold", and even though the clips are pretty simple, just some obscure images of landscapes and human figures following each other in a slide show manner, the music combined with the images works a whole lot better than being just music. Apart from the video clips, I didn't like this much... (J)

Contact: Iris Light Records, 9 Station Walk, Highbridge, Somerset, TA9 3HQ, UK. www.irislight.co.uk

Der Blutharsch "When All Else Fails!" CD WKN/Tesco Organisation

On initial listens I was somewhat disappointed by this new album, but nonetheless this has been one to positively grow on me after repeated listens over an extended passage of time (I received an advance copy when visiting Albin back in September, 2001). Also, after gaining familiarity with this album, one thing to note is that it encompasses a sound and style that although acknowledges the past sound(s) of Der Blutharsch, also hints at the potential future direction of the group due to the incorporation of new elements and influences. So, with regard to these 'new' elements, here I

would be referring to a few compositions where it sees Albin at his quirkiest yet - maybe acknowledging a touch of influence coming from fellow Viennese artists Novy Svet? (Track 2 is a good example of this with up tempo melody and myriad of eccentric instrument/sound samples woven into a general percussive military framework). Other 'new' elements would also include using clearly synthetic programming which would seem to give a nod towards another of Albin's temporary projects La Maison Modern. However, this is not to say that the militant stance of Der Blutharsch has been dropped, rather still remaining the overt tone of proceedings here. As for acknowledging past albums, it is noted there are a number of slower pieces included within the 13 tracks, with the general aura arriving at the distant morose atmospheres to that of the "Der Sieg..." album. Yet with the shorter song orientated format of this album, this also acknowledges the style and format of later album "The Track of the Hunted", as does the mid paced track 5 with heavy percussion, monotone vocals and rousing orchestral melodies set amidst samples of falling bombs. Albin's new partner Martina is also introduced on this release, complimenting Albin's (and other guest vocalists) contributions with whispered, spoken or low key hymn like vocals on numerous tracks. While many who are well aware of Albin's musical past will automatically want to make comparisons due to this reintroduction of a female vocalist, I on the other hand am not even going to bother (that was then...this is now, so to say). But not to be denigrated to merely a backing singer, track 9 sees Martina takes the (solo) vocal lead, presented in a strong part sung/part spoken style which works well with the heavy percussion and piano lead tune. In terms of collaborative input on this album, with track 8 it is the main vocal that has most obviously been contributed by artist Demiere Volonte, amidst mid paced percussion and part orchestral/part programmed tune - another track melding old and new influence. One particular standout track of the album is the rather aggressive track 10 - an over the top composition of militant bombastic anger, created by fast and harsh driving percussive elements, deeply rousing orchestral samples and main chant of "patria et libertas" (and ultimately showing just how good Der Blutharsch can be). Yet, the (potential) future direction of Der Blutharsch seems to be most evident on track 13, where it clearly indicates a greater reliance on programming and synthetic sounds to diversify the sound - here using low key rhythmic programming scored alongside orchestral synth textures (the rasping aggressive vocals on this piece have been contributed by Jurgen of Novy Svet). And lastly the final (and hidden) 14th track is another fine example of a kinky neo-military ditty, being an upbeat yet swirlingly surreal jig of all things?! Weird perhaps but still a good listen! It is clear that on this album that Albin is attempting to broaden the horizons (and perceptions) of what Der Blutharsch's music is capable of, yet it will be interesting to see if the hardened neo-folk fans can accept the sound shifting away from a purely nostalgic and militaristic one. (R)



D-503 / Hinyouki "Snow White" CD
Verato Project

This is a collaboration work with D-503 from the U.S. and Hinyouki from Spain, both of whom were completely unknown to me prior to this release. As the title suggests, this work is dedicated to the Brothers Grimm fairytale and the sleeve has been decorated in quite a cheap fashion with full colour images from Dita von Teese's sexy Snow White photo series. The tracklist consists of solo tracks by both artists which the others have then remixed. Hinyouki's material tends to be pretty basic harsh noise whereas D-503 presents a bit more diverse approach ranging from harsh noise to concrete sounds and field recordings. At times I'm irritated by the very 'laptop-ish' fast digital cuts and clicks, but most of the time the tracks remain quite uninspiring and tiring to listen to. Should I come up with a favourite track, I'd mention D-503's 2nd track which is a calm collage of concrete sounds and minimal drones. (J)

Died Like Flies "Enuclea Il Vuoto Ingoia Muori" CD

The cover includes a statement "D.L.F. supports the anti-EBM campaign against disco shit". Well, why not, but such a statement on the CD cover makes me feel like this is a project of a couple of teen boys. DLF being from Italy, I'm not surprised of titles like "Black Semen", "Cum on Pale Corpse" and "Death Farm", yet it's quite funny that despite not being really EBM, D.L.F. manages to reach closer to disco feeling than one would assume after the statement. Possibly computer generated, rather fast paced rhythm beats are not always totally oppressive and crushing, but could make industrial club audience move their bodies. DLF is good stuff, though. Most of the time it's distorted with dark walls of bass-loaded hums, crushing industrial sounds and jet black atmosphere. Only the digitally clear and mechanical feeling doesn't allow me to praise it too much. (M)

Contact: deadlikeflies@libero.it



Diktat "AnarK.A.O.S. 2001" CD
Blade Records

How did this happen? After a fairly good (although nowhere close to revolutionary) LP, Diktat returns with this CD which sounds nothing but leftover material from some demo recordings. The hardcore type of vocals still work, but bad sounding drum beats and dull sound makes this irritating to listen. The sound is like from a cheap multi-effect which makes it plastic sounding and finally at the point where the fast paced drum machine patterns are going with similar rhythms to vocals in a highly annoying way, it begins to sound like a joke. But it's not. This is not loud, hard nor soft. It's almost useless. I remember when I tried to hunt down more Diktat releases, and made cash orders from distributors to get some stuff, but after this I won't be so enthusiastic anymore. It's not ALL that bad, but if even half of the record is mediocre or WORSE, it doesn't save it to make full color graphics and put inside hand painted metal plates. (M)

Contact: Blade Records, c/o Emilio Crescenzi, Via F.lli Rosselli 11, 20021 Bollate (MI), Italy. web.tiscalinet.it/bladerecords

Disraptor "Milgram" CD

Here is the new demo from a German rhythm/power noise act, Disraptor. Unfortunately this is a genre which doesn't interest me the slightest bit. The tracks usually feature one very rhythmical and distorted pattern which is being repeated over and over again. I was actually surprised that the sounds weren't as overly distorted as I've heard from other acts in this genre, but still the material really didn't do anything for me. The quality of sounds and the tracks in general wasn't too far from the biggest names in the power noise scene, so I don't see any reason why Disraptor couldn't succeed with the rest of them, but this simply didn't offer me anything that I would be interested in. (J)

Contact: www.disraptor.de.vu

DL/EK "XIB" CD
Soulworm Editions

This is a re-release of a CD on Bastet Recordings which already was a re-release of a tape on Jeremy Bamber Tapes, released in 1992. The work in question is a collaboration between the acts more widely known as Dachau Lustknaben and Einsatzkommandos, conceptually dealing with German death camps in WWII; a theme that nowadays has become stale, but mind you this was recorded over 10 years ago (even though the theme had definitely been used long before that). Anyway, as there aren't any vocals or samples featured here, the theme can easily be disregarded. The material is pretty traditional early 90s power electronics, blending in some harsh noise elements as well. The sound is pretty low end all the way and tends to get a bit boring at some places due to the lack of vocals or simply some more varied elements. On the other, tracks like "0.1759/0.1760" work nicely as there are some more violent feedback and higher frequency electronics abused, representing the more harsh noise side of this disc. All in all, I think this is an okay slab of noisy electronics, but at least to me it wasn't interesting enough to explain why it has been re-released two times already. Especially since both of them have been done in such limited editions that it will soon be sold out again anyway. (J)

Contact: Soulworm Editions, Mickiewicz 2/54, 21-500 Biala

Podlaska, Poland. www.soulworm.com

Doc Wör Mirran "Soundtrack of Death" CD
Moloko+

Doc Wör Mirran is a long running project whose discography contains some really good stuff but also some fairly useless things. After some more ambient styled recordings, "Soundtrack of Death" is definitely louder and oppressive in terms of the mood. I would have a hard time calling it noise, industrial or ambient, but it certainly carries elements from each genre. The material is in fact very simplistic and even primitive sometimes; using very standard synth chords through distortion and backing them up with some echoing metal junk abuse, then adding more and more layers of these elements until it all becomes one chaotic texture of sound. Still it sounds a lot better than my description. There's some pretty good authentic sounds of the aforementioned metal junk as well as breaking glass and other objects. The fourth track "Halál" is constructed almost completely from these sounds and I must say that it's really interesting and undoubtedly the best one on this CD. If it was driven through a distortion pedal with a muddy sound, it would be quite close to the likes of Macronympha etc., but now it's just really heavy acoustic junk abuse. Brilliant. This is definitely one of the best releases I've heard from Doc Wör Mirran. It's packaged in a nice metal film box to fit the 'soundtrack' concept. (J)

Contact: ralf_friel@ferrostaal.com

Dormant "For You" Demo CD

This is without a doubt the worst demo I've ever received and I have no idea why it was sent to Degenerate. It's a Swedish guy playing cheesy modern heavy metal just using a cheap synth and probably some computer sequencing and then sings on top of it with a really terrible voice. Fucking awful. (J)

Contact: h02ejnp@du.se, www.listen.to/dormant

Douglas Nine "Schmerzhaft" CD

Legion Sudan

There's Hitler and co. in the front cover as well as elsewhere in sleeve. I guess this is useless parody of power electronics? All we have here is radio-noise and in the last couple of tracks they have inserted couple of samples from cartoons, like "I'm Bart Simpson, who are you?" and in the last track there's the legendary voice saying "That's all folks!". I can tell you that you'll want to spend your 35 minutes with anything else but this. (M)

Contact: legionsudan@hotmail.com, www.legionsudan.cjb.net



Drape Excrement "Borrowed Time" CD
Art Konkret

Another half of Söldnergeist has been doing his solo project for years. A relatively small amount of releases in the past. One tape, one LP, a split CD and a split 7" in addition to compilation tracks. Now a literally full length CD comes with 70 minutes playing time. It offers haunting and oppressive death industrial. The best thing is the suffocating lo-fi atmosphere. It's created with low tuned drones, echoing industrial noise loops, clangs of metal, silent spoken word fragments. There are 16 tracks in total, so it doesn't become boring. I'd say they reach further than for example Brighter Death Now has done in their latest releases. So admirers of death industrial, do not miss this! The only negative comment I have is the lame cover design. It's made with a computer with a very dull result. (M)

Contact: Art Konkret, Uhländstr. 41, 76135 Karlsruhe, Germany. www.art-konkret.de

Dresden '45 "Anfang-Ende" CD

Torpor Records

German rhythmic and powerful industrial. You can sense the old school spirit of industrial here, but it doesn't become industrial-disco. Dark death industrial soundscapes are combined to militant and powerful rhythms with a noisy edge. In a few occasions Dresden '45 even includes some melody loop or other quiet moments, but it doesn't make this less interesting. It only makes the hard moments sound harder. (M)

Contact: Torpor Records GbR, Jochen Mehlhase, Stormsrasse 5, 07551 Gera, Germany. www.torpor-records.de

Dresden '45 "Feuertod" Picture LP

Torpor Records

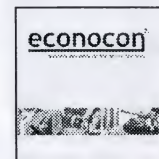
This is another excellent release from Torpor Records. Formerly totally unknown label (and its bands) to me. Dresden '45 offers 47 minutes of war industrial in German spirit. Sound is created from various industrial machine sounds and metal objects, looped and constructed into heavy industrial noise/power electronics and sometimes even atmospheric "ambient". Loud power tools, spoken word samples, reversed sounds etc. The overall atmosphere is close to the German sound of G.O., Söldnergeist, etc but actually Dresden '45 sounds so different when they rely on different methods to create the sound. All songs are different, you can't get bored. Very recommended!! (M)



DVT "DVT" CD
Cranial Fracture Recordings

This is the debut CD from DVT, an up-and-coming Australian dark industrial/power electronics artist. DVT perform the sort of 'modern post-industrial' with a definitely more American influenced sound (e.g. Navicon Torture Technologies) than for example the usual Cold Meat Industry style. Nonetheless there aren't any techno rhythms or other annoying things that are usually linked with the U.S. industrial scene. The tracks are all made from quite similar a formula where a constantly changing sound and complex structures have been replaced with a more straight forward, even static sound, but luckily the intensity remains almost all the way through. The sounds are very rich, with countless layers of distorted sounds and detailed loops dominating most of the tracks. There are speech samples and occasional vocals used, but quite sparingly, and as the vocals tend to sound a bit weak, it's good that they've kept them to a minimum. There's also some metal junk sounds, or at least samples of metal junk used, and they definitely deepen the whole 'industrial' feel. In spite of being well structured, layered and performed, the sounds remain quite similar throughout the disc, i.e. there's the same massive wall of distorted sound in every track and eventually it gets boring. The tracks all begin to sound the same. Had there been a couple of really over-the-top extreme power electronics/harsh noise tracks along with a few really calm dark ambient/industrial pieces, the rest of the material would have stood out enough to keep it interesting. Anyway, I'd advice everyone to check this out rather than all those boring 'disco industrial' releases. (J)

Contact: cranial@ar.com.au, www.fracture.ar.com.au



Econocon "Business Solution for the Active Terrorist" CD
Old Europa Cafe

From the depths of the Swedish woods hails yet another project of Ulvtharm and Nordvargr known from Mz.412 and Folkstorm. This release I am now holding in my hand is far from the black industrial of Mz.412 and the rough power electronics of Folkstorm. Actually this reminds me of some ebm-stuff I listened to some years ago with distorted rhythms and heavily processed vocals. Must say that this release is rougher around the edges than ebm usually is. Imagine taking "Great Day to Get Even" by Institut and simply slow the thing down a bit and you have the basic sound of Econocon. The noisy rhythms are present in all the tracks to some extent but there are also calmer and almost musical passages. The first two tracks are driven by a noisy beat and don't really impress me, as there is a lack of aggression. Track 3, "Hatepolicy", is a track with a nice bass line and a distorted voice ranting which later gets drowned when the bass line is followed by drums playing the same pattern as the bass. The rest of the tracks are quite varied along the lines of either noise-drum rhythm or heavy bass line with processed vocals varying in loudness. At some occasions it becomes noisy but never long enough or harsh enough. Overall the sounds of this CD fail to impress me as I was expecting more aggression. I want either heavy walls of noise with some junk thrown in or some punishing high frequencies and here I find none. This is not total crap as I actually enjoy listening to it but this is only a CD I play when I am occupied with something else. Another positive note is the use of themes and this CD and project is focused on the relation between business and war. Quite interesting in the world we live in today. A CD for those who love to listen to their music loud and are afraid to play stuff by Slogun or Taint loud in fear of getting angry neighbors barking at them, also for those who want to taste a fresh theme instead of your average sexual abuse, fascist or true crime theme in power electronics. (TSP)

Eyow Karoom "Aggro Stations Volume 1" CD
Verato Project

Eyow Karoom is a fairly new project from Mr. Cosmo of Cosmonauts Hail Satan, and as the label said the material to be harsh electronic noise and power electronics, I was pretty surprised to find out that it actually wasn't as noisy as I expected. The sounds are definitely harsh and could be said to be noisy at some parts, but should I categorise this somehow, I'd most likely put it under the harsh ambient monicker. The tracks are often quite monotonous with some layers of looping sounds combined to some more random elements, but still the result sounds very powerful and enjoyable. A lot of the noises sound as if they originate from broken electronics or manipulated guitars/basses, and that's what probably makes it all so interesting, as the overall atmosphere is very close to being lo-fi, yet it never sounds too weak or thin. Somehow the material on this disc reminds me a bit of ID's "Proton One" vinyl which although being a bit more experimental and complex, had a very similar mood on it. This was a really nice release presenting the kind of harsh ambient stuff you don't come across too often these days. As usual with the Verato Project releases, the edition is limited to 50 copies, and the packaging is pretty special – this time a full colour hand made digipak. (J)

Ex.Order "War Within Breath" CD
Malignant Records

Ex.Order (the malevolent power electronics/noise industrial alter ego of Inade), have unleashed upon the unsuspecting masses their

fantastically titled second album "War Within Breath". With the material spanning 1997 to 2000, rather than being a new album proper, this CD is a collection of studio tracks (five unreleased and four lifted of the prior "Law of Heresy" MC), and three live tracks. While the first Ex-Order album was albeit a solid one, I will admit that it pales in comparison to this, which I feel has a lot to do with the digital polishing and buffing undertaken by Malignant Sound Technologies to create added sonic punch. Likewise if I did not know that this CD contained some live material, I would have never picked it as the flow and clarity of sound between tracks is immaculate giving an overall feel of being a formally composed album, rather than a collection of tracks from different sources. Without giving a breakdown of each individual track, there may be a singularity in approach with this collection, yet a clear breadth of elements are used to ensure this is far from being one dimensional industrial noise/power electronics. Thus to give an overall description the sound it is stripped back, raw and direct, using seething and bristling textures, abrasive loops, loosely constructed rhythms and heavily distorted and processed vocals and/or voice samples. Notwithstanding, "A World of Lies" is a highlight with its pummeling percussion and vocals processed to encapsulate a sonic razor like quality. Alternately the deadly and seething pulse of the title track contains a trench warfare type atmosphere, driven by sounds of sprayed gunfire and accentuated by sporadic cries of agony. Intense stuff indeed... Additionally, late album track "Generated Invasion" has a tensile sound consisting of cyclic noise loops, bursts of static and sermon like vocals flanged to the point of being indecipherable. "Caustic" might not be the right word, but it is the first one that comes to mind... To conclude, when first hearing this CD I was quite surprised by the similarities between selected sound textures and some of the noisier sound elements used the latest Inade album "The Cracking of the Anonymous". Whilst I guess on one level this is to be expected seeing both groups contain the same two members, on another level it represents a cross pollination of ideas between the two projects that I certainly was not expecting. Regardless another essential release from the Malignant Records stables. (R)

Contact: Malignant Records, P.O.Box 19473, Baltimore, MD 21206, USA. www.malignantrecords.com

Fever Spoon "Cities of the Red Nights" CDr Anima Mal Nata

Anima Mal Nata managed to put out CDr's with a quite similar atmosphere. This is, alike many others, noise with some electro acoustic feeling. Lots of the noise is dry, acoustic junk abuse and on the back they have electric noise mess and feedback. Very concrete and physical sounds. Not much more to say. (M)

Contact: Anima Mal Nata, c/o Marcel Herms, Postbus 6359, 7401 JJ Deventer, The Netherlands. mjh@ision.nl

Feverspoon "Escape" CDr SnipSnip

Dutch noise, and very good in fact. It's harsh, but source sounds are so well audible that it's sometimes close to "electro acoustic" style. The sound is noisier and more painful than distortion-pedal walls. At its noisiest moments Feverspoon could be compared to some works of The New Blockaders, noisier side of Due Process, 80's Merzbow, even the instrumentals of early 80's Sutcliffe Jugend, etc. I like all these metal junks, feedbacks and screech of iron, radio noise or whatever they always use. Combinations are diverse and it's a pleasure to listen to these 5 tracks as each one of them offers some new elements. (M)

Contact: SnipSnip, c/o David Reed, 580 East Town Str., 335, Columbus, OH 43215, USA. lupine447@hotmail.com

First Law "Refusal as Attitude" CD Loki Foundation

Third full length album for this project, that as far as I know is either a side project of, or otherwise has direct lineage to Turbund Sturmwerk. However not to let this bit of information confuse you, it is worth highlighting that the music of First Law is vastly different to the neo-classical/military industrial sounds of the aforementioned. Operating from an almost progressive, dark ambient/experimental sound, the music of First Law is on one hand quite composed (with respect of the slow rhythm structures), but likewise contain a freeform, heavily drugged, hallucinogenic ambient quality to it (possibly illustrating the weaving journey through the recesses of the subconscious, evoking surreal morphing images and half remembered thoughts... maybe...). Yet it the sampled voice on "Still Humping the American Dream" asking: "what was the meaning of this trip? Was I just roaming around in a drug frenzy of some kind?" that hits the mark perfectly for a description of the albums overall vibe. The mid paced military styled drumming and acoustic guitar of the opening track "In the Final Fleeting Seconds of Life" might beg a comparison to Turbund Sturmwerk, however the swirling synth melodies and austral textures negates this by giving it a sound all its own - that of First Law. The mid album composition "I am Not a Coward" is rather oppressive with its heavy droning textures and multi-layered synth tunes, that when combined use of a slow clanging rhythm takes on a heavy orchestral quality. Alternately late album track "The End of the World-Concept" has an urgency not present on other tracks, with mid paced tribal beat structures, clanging bells and the forever swirling vortex of hazy synth textures that multiple in intensity as the track progresses. Final track is the album's title (split into 5 parts and extending over a 24 minute expanse), encapsulates a weaving complex journey of complex weaving melodies, dynamic rhythms and enveloping dreamy psychedelia to create a fantastic cinematic experience for the mind's eye. Sit back, close your eyes and be swept away... Maybe the sound of will be a bit avant-garde for some dark ambient fans, yet for anyone with a mild experimental streak will gain something from this, and if you have any of the other First Law albums you would have no doubt already contemplated getting this. (R)

Frames a Second "Disoriented Xpress" CD Spectre

"Disoriented Xpress" is the second full length CD for Frames a Second I believe - however I am only familiar with a previous 7" ep of the group released on the same label that has sired this offering. Distorted and damn crunchy, the opener "Metrical Beats" is a pulsating affair of mid tempo snappy beats and driving rhythms

and as such setting the scene for much of the album. Without any real let up, track 1 merges into the next ("Specified Information"), likewise detailing a subtle shift of focus in the composition towards that of sweeping sounds and rhythms. Again not letting up between tracks and flowing directly into "Cycle of Misinformation", things amp up slightly with a faster paced track of machine drones and successions of rhythmic pulses and sequences - ultimately seeing the album hitting its stride! As for the title track, with this being built on a heavy undercurrent of death industrial textures, it is the lighter beats and synth tune that balance out the sound, and in the process creating a fantastic head nod session! Alternately later album tracks, whilst still rhythmic, take on a darker and sadistic dark industrial type framework ("Silence is Bad" with clanging metallic percussion and "Y-Incision" with gloomy programming and quirky sequences). With the title track popping up again as track ten, the second time around it is in an alternate version being a touch more menacing than the first. "Changing into Club Music" whilst not entirely what the name would suggest, remains rhythmically based with heavy distortion and crunch, but is mostly devoid of melody or tune (this is by no means bad of course!). Final album track is credited as a bonus one and while not stated appears to be a remix of a track called "Legend". What we get in the end is a track where there is a heavy emphasis on melodic programming without a reliance on noise and grinding beats, as is the case with many of the preceding tracks (with a tinge of urgency, the track surges out of the speakers in a very smooth and club friendly guise). Overall I would have to say that rhythmic industrialists would definitely be doing themselves a grave disservice if they were to not check out this album. Very commendable. (R)

Contact: Spectre, P.O.Box 88, 2020 Antwerpen 2, Belgium. www.spectre.be

Francisco Lopez "Untitled #90" CD Ohm Records

If the title of this CD is lame, and the total absence of any covers even more lame (there's only an almost blank silver disc in an empty slimline jewelcase), the same thing is what I could say about the sound. I guess utter minimalism is the purpose of the whole thing, but in this case it's gone too far for my taste. The whole disc seems to be nothing more but one-dimensional meaningless sound. It's like listening to a couple of insects making their buzz and then add some effect. Yes, that could actually work, but not for the whole length of a CD. After 5 minutes you start to wonder if something is eventually going to happen, but you can listen to all the rest of the full length CD (in 1 track) and find a couple of barely noticeable changes. Do you want to test your limits of minimal sound? If yes, then try this. (M)

Contact: OHM Records, Pontoppidansgate 9A, 0462 Oslo, Norway. www.ohmrecords.no



Genesis P-Orridge / Z'ev "Direction of Travel" CD Cold Spring Records

This 12 track CD come courtesy of two original pioneers of the industrial scene, who have been active in such musical pursuits (read: late 1970's) even before the term 'industrial' music was coined as a descriptive term (the term since becoming bastardised from all it stood for at its initial inception). Anyway I digress...the music on this disc appear to have been originally recorded in 1990 and potentially re-mixed or at least mastered in 2000. With instrumentation ranging from Tibetan bowls & bells, drums and violins (that have been further processed and mixed), you would reasonably expect these recordings to encompass a spiritual sound. Likewise with the cover including extensive text relating to the attainment of meditative trance states you may also expect that this is not music to listen to directly, rather it is for use as an atmospheric musical backdrop for such journeys into the inner recesses of the psyche. Whilst not something I would put on an listen too directly, it does work as a non abrasive sound focal point backdrop (or otherwise as I believe it was intended) a focal point for meditation activities. Overall the album has a warm enveloping aura of loosely constructed loops, minimalist washes of sound and sporadic elements of tribal-esque percussion. Each piece is relatively short at around 3 to 4 minutes, showcasing repetition and minimalist progression over the duration of the tracks. I would say that this is quite an interesting release for its concept and content but not something I would recommend if you wanted a release to actively listen to. (R)

Contact: Cold Spring Records, P.O.Box 40, Long Buckby, Northants, NN6 7PT, UK. www.coldspring.co.uk



Genocide Organ "Genocide Organ" CD Tesco Organisation

First up, this is not a new album, rather a 'lost' album that was meant to be the bridging release between the first "Leichenlinie" LP and the "Save our Slaves" LP. Slated for release in 1990 on a Japanese label, this never eventuated, with the full album now being officially released on Tesco to commemorate the group's two live performances in Japan during March 2003.

In assessing the aesthetics of this release, and when considering the packaging in light of prior G.O. articles, I can admit that I am

rather disappointed. Essentially I was anticipating this release to be presented like a miniature version of the LP's ie: gatefold cover in heavy card, gloss stock, with separate printed image attached to the front. However despite being a gatefold design, the cover is flimsy (barely constituting cardboard) and printed with a rather dull finish. Hmm, a minor annoyance, but what of the music? 10 tracks in all, there are some classic tracks that were previously released on other formats (such as 'Death to China' parts I & IV and 'White Power Forces'), that have now been released in the rightful place alongside the remaining album tracks.

Overall the album isn't as brute force as some of the "Leichenlinie" material, rather presenting tracks of more subdued and seething anger (such is the case with the slow throbbing mass of distorted noise of vocals that comprises opener 'Death to China I'). 'White Power Forces' ups the anti, with quicker and higher pitched modulated distortion, whilst the monotone vocals spit forth a barely decipherable sermon. Punishing indeed.... Alternately 'Swamp' contains a sickening and lurking atmosphere derived from its mid ranged noise and disfigured loops, with spoken vocals barely puncturing sonic mass. 'Sturmfeiber' chooses a more straight forward construction, using layers of mid ranged frequencies and a what sound like an archival type nationalistic song.

'Death to China IV' continues a seething atmosphere of loose rhythms and fluctuating noise, made all the more poignant by the sampled music lifted from a traditional Chinese opera. 'In the Ghetto' is more atmospheric than other tracks, using a distant and echoed noise effects and throbbing elements that almost represents the sound of a helicopter's rotor blades swooping low overhead. As for the slow and caustic death industrial vibe of 'Born to be Slaughtered', it could easily have been lifted from any of Brighter Death Now's CD's from the "Great Death" trilogy (yes that is a complement to both!).

Final album track 'Und morgen die ganze Welt' is noisy, chaotic and most importantly foreboding, with its doom laden loops, splintered noise and urgent shouts & wails of the vocals, and by dragging this aural torture over over 11 minutes, it represents a fantastic conclusion to the album.

This is destined to become a highly sought after item given it finally sees the official release of this 'lost' album of archival material (recorded between 1985-1990). It is just a shame that the packaging does not live up to the collectors fetishism of prior Genocide Organ releases. (R)

Gerogerigege "Saturday Big Cock Salaryman" CD Full Volume Agency

It's always a surprise whether you're going to hear decent noise or useless "sound art" when you buy a Gerogerigege record. I still remain a fan of their crazy junk noise and was very glad to see a new CD being released. Recorded in summer 2001 with a 3 member line-up. Juntaro does all voice "4 all breath and lip noise", which means anything that can be orally made with a distorted microphone. Shobu Saitoh is making guitar noise and Gero 30 is listed as an "exhibitionist". So I'm not aware if he has any audio contribution. This is not advertised as an mCD, but less than 13 minutes of playing time is unlikely to satisfy everybody who is expecting a full album. But the little we have here is good. It's not as great as for example "Yellow Trash Bazooka", "Mother Fellatio" or other (for me) legendary 7"s, but in quite a similar style with 35 short "songs" of sloppy and distorted noise with loud vocals. It could be even more noisier and with feedback. Let's hope Gerogerigege will stay alive and bring some crazy noise in the future as well. (M)

Contact: www.go.to/fva

Goat "Goatless and Black Bible Black" Card CDr PACrec

In the stream of so many PACrec discs, Goat has a role to remain as one of the mediocre ones. U.S. harsh noise. Yes, it's fine and nice to listen to, but doesn't capture enough of attention to want to listen over and over again. (M)

Gomikawa Fumio "Return of the Gomikawa Fumio" CD Alchemy Records

This CD, released last year is packaged in colorful and comical covers and present 4 long collaboration tracks of these Japanese noise heroes. Mikawa and Fumio are better known together as Incapacitants, but Mikawa also known from Hijokaidan, Fumio has done solo works and used to be in CCCC. Kohei Gomi is better known as Pain Jerk. I have not heard what he's doing lately, but not too many Pain Jerk releases have landed in my hands during recent years. This CD is no surprise. It offers exactly what comes when you combine Pain Jerk and Incapacitants. Sound is extremely harsh. More dynamic changes than Incapacitants has. Often both channels have different sounds coming, so when placing yourself correctly in front of the speakers, the stereo effect is great. 46 minutes is blast from beginning to end. Extensive use of analogue synth (or at least similar) noises, fast paced buzz and bleep sounds, is not my favorite kind of noise, but this remains still good. Also those elements remind more of some Pain Jerk. There are some vocals with Incapacitants style. In the end no other conclusion than guaranteed to satisfy noise fanatics. (M)

Contact: Alchemy Records, 1-15-9-507, Nishi-Shinsaibashi, Chuo-ku, Osaka, 542-0086, Japan. www.alchemy.cc



Grey Wolves "Blood and Sand" CD Cold Spring Records

Those individuals who can attest to having heard a small portion of the Grey Wolves significant output over the years (a massive amount of tapes, yet far fewer items on vinyl and CD formats) may describe the project as a politically heavy power electronics act. Whilst this is not at all wrong, there is however another side to the Grey Wolves that is less widely known and recognised: those tracks

that are far less power electronics oriented and aimed at an atmospheric noise approach. Thus it is exactly this later sound which is to be found on this new CD "Blood and Sand". Upon reading the liner notes of the cover, it interestingly states that the CD is a re-mix of same title that was released on cassette shortly after the Gulf War, making this release all the more relevant given current world events. As for the music, only two tracks are present on this disc, yet both span a lengthy passage resulting in a CD that is excess of 55 minutes. First track "Desert Storm" is a slow moving and tensely brooding piece containing sweeping sounds, throbbing rhythms and indecipherable radio voices, that overall flits between structure and free form flow. Following piece "Gulf Breeze" takes a similar tactic of wielding a tensile and caustic vibe, yet does introduce (late in the piece) a heavily processed guitar/ drums based element within the noise layers. Despite the atmospheric inclinations, one of the greatest elements of this CD is that there is always the sense of an undercurrent of aggression ready to burst forth from the speakers in full sonic warfare. Whilst this aural obliteration never entirely eventuates, "Blood and Sand" is no less of a quality release without it, whilst in turn showcasing the lesser know atmospheric noise side of the Grey Wolves. (R)

Gruntsplatter "Chronicle the Famine" CD Desolation House

This is probably the best one from Gruntsplatter so far. This is how "dark ambient" should sound. Besides minimal and dark keyboard sounding parts (not sure are they), there are layers and layers of drifting and droning noises. It makes this less typical, and very interesting to listen due to the multiple details you hear every time you really pay attention to what you are listening. Among the best dark ambient releases I've heard. Or should this go already in the category of death industrial? Some of it would, but who cares, good stuff indeed. (M)

Contact: www.desolationhouse.com

Guilty Connector "Colesterinosis Extracellular" 3"CDr Tabula Rasa

Part 8 in the Dermatology Series is the Japanese Guilty Connector offering a track entitled "Brighter than a 10,000 Cacophonous Suns". I've previously heard the "First Noise Attack" by Guilty Connector and actually found it quite entertaining. The track here is a live recording starting off with metal junk noise with not much distortion and some occasional vocal abuse. There's also a lot of feedback all throughout the track. As the track proceeds, there's more distortion added to the junk noise and some electronics noise appears as well. Some silent parts appear as well with just some slight metal junk noise, but they always end abruptly with some really extreme harsh noise electronics. I could have done without the silent, more experimental parts but the noise and metal junk abuse compensates it, leaving a nice taste of the entire 16 minute track. (J)

Contact: tabularasabar@hotmail.com

Habeeb "Initiation into Nothingness" Card CDr PACrec

This isn't for my taste. Nothing but drum machine beats. Maybe you could say it's somehow an old school industrial track, but I've never been into drum machine beat music and this won't change the fact. (M)



Herbst9 "Consolamentum" mLP Loki Foundation

Herbst9 return with stunning results on this 26 minute mini LP, presenting two tracks of their now trademark archaic & ritualistic style of dark ambience. "Bloodmoon Ritual" is the first offering presented to the listener, expanding and unfolding over a 15 minute expanse. Opening with the echoed reverberations of a variety of different toned gongs, the track crawls forward at catatonic pace setting the scene quite nicely. With the gongs and assorted metallic clatter becoming slightly more animated (gradually interweaving themselves into drone like textures), sampled Gregorian chants rise into the mix, only for tribalised percussion to rise to the fore. Later the track surges off into dense droning territory with the occasional inclusion of muted orchestral textures, finally concluding with convergence of dense drones, and slow rhythmic pulse. Alternately the title track begins with sweeping and massively atmospheric drones that are used in an inter-linking and overlapping manner to ultimately build upon itself. The intensity is then cranked up even further with the inclusion of random metallic noise and sporadic yet booming percussive elements that all assist in solidifying the main focus of the composition. The later segment of the track sees the drones fall to the background, instead relying on slow tribal percussion and ghostly vocalisations, yet despite finishing close to the 12 minute mark it is far too soon for my liking! Basically there is nothing more to add other than Herbst9 and Loki Foundation have proved once again why they deserve all the accolades they are receiving. (R)

His Divine Grace "Die Schlangenkönigin" CD Hau Ruck/Tesco Distribution

Being another mysterious group on the Hau Ruck label, I know basically nothing about this project, nor does the cover reveal any useful information. Regardless, this 10 track, 60 minute album encompasses quite beautiful, yet distant and forlorn atmospheres, without being specifically dark or depressing. Utilizing a slow and meandering flow, it opens with environmental recordings (birds in full chorus at the break of a thunderstorm) and spoken vocals, whilst the music presents itself with an orchestral styled sound. Using droning harmonics, the music is tinged with a classical music tone given the synthesizer has been used to vaguely replicate an organ and wind/ string instruments. Yet despite this focus the music avoids trying to sound like a pompous neo-classical project. Having established its sound early on, the album slowly shifts and

unfolds without revealing any sudden surprises, thus, this album works much better if you put it on and let it swell around you. Accordingly the music tends to ebb and flow both within tracks and between the inter-linking compositions, without ever becoming dull nor too active. Likewise the inclusion of additional environmental recordings throughout adds to the depth and texture of the album to give off a definite old European vibe. Quite a nice album overall, that I think will be one of those recordings that with grow and mature with repeated listens. (R)

Human De-Structur "Fatal Order" CD Torpor Records

This is a good surprise. 79 minutes is really a full length, but luckily this is good material. Here we have rhythmic analog noise. Don't expect any drum'n'noise stuff, but a harsh combination of grinding loops, painful electric screech, feedback and noise. It has a nice analog lo-fi sound, but the noise is still sharp enough and maintains its brutality even though its well organized. There is no vocals or samples, but it's far from plain noise. Very good CD. (M)

Human De-Structur "Der Fluch des Denkens" CD Torpor Records

Another literally full length CD from German power electronics(/ noise) artist. Human De-Structur continues with mostly instrumental analog method, but less noisy. There is vocals during a couple of minutes during the lengthy playing time of the CD, but most of the time they create not harsh, but still noisy enough analog soundscapes. With this 2nd album, they are not so far away from Operation Cleansweep and many other German artists/bands, but Human De-Structur is different from most of the current ones because it relies almost completely on the electronic noise without samples/vocals. I like their older material more than this, but this isn't bad either. (M)

I.corax "The Cadaver Pulse I: Sealed in a Radiant Larval Maelstrom" CDr Blue Sector

I'm afraid I can't do this disc justice when I have to write this so close to the deadline, but I simply have to say a few words about it. I.corax is a name which has been dwelling in the Finnish dark ambient underground for some years now, the scarce material having impressed everyone who has managed to hear it. This is the act's first full length outing, released on their own Blue Sector label. To put it simply, this is a combination of dark ambient and post-industrial, but it must be one of the best things to have come out of this scene for years. Massive soundscapes constructed with awesome skill and vision, inventive elements layered to support a larger entirety instead of just for the sake of being there. Amazing. The packaging is also somewhat special, coming sealed in various coloured special jewel boxes including black/white photos etc. Limited edition of 80 copies. (J)

Contact: www.bluesector.qjb.net

Immaculate:Grotesque "Stabbing Eye Fetish" Card CDr PACrec

Hmm... the title of the disc is so fascinating that my expectations for the noise were high. I don't know where Troniks / PACrec finds these bands, but half of them are such names I have never heard of. This is brutal harsh noise with slow paced changes on low end and good details on the high end sounds. How many ways can you describe a harsh noise record? I have listened and written reviews of probably 10 records today and find I'm running out of words. Bands do sound different, but my abilities to use English don't allow me to make justice to the structure of this noise. To put it simple: I enjoyed this. (M)

Immaculate:Grotesque "Beating a Dead Horse" Advance 3"CDr

Chondritic Sound

Devastating and dense monolithic analog noise walls with absolutely no remorse. Almost like an updated version of classic Incapacitants CD "Ministry of Foolishness" but more of a true industrial/PE sound (minus voice). In this dreary and oppressive environment, gigantic low end continually flutters and grinds away with lot of middle textures weaving in between layers and layers of white noise and ugly, cold, high end electronic tones. I-G manages to wipe away your focus while giving subtle details and islands of texture and tone to lock onto along the way. Cold as hell but full of stoic and bitter energy. For people with ruined lives. Limited to 50. (DF)

Contact: grey@sinkhole.net

I'm Sore/ Princess Dragon- Mom CDr

Born Horse

I'm Sore have some connection to MSBR and are similar in sound. The sound is static and somehow manages to be ambient at times. They have 12 short tracks on the split cd with silly titles. I know many people

in the noise world think that humor doesn't belong in the noise world but one can only hear so much about whores and nazis. PDM come screaming out of the gate with two live tracks of amazing density and depth of sound. The first track is a celebration of the the devil robot's birthday and the second track is the "Noise Camp" show. PDM is one of the best bands making noise in the world and this is a great release. (A)

Inhalant "Tiny Blessings" Card CDr PACrec

Low bass rumbling and high pitched slashing noise with feedback. It demands quite high volume to sound strong. Low volume doesn't give you the full potential for this type of sound. Non existing artwork and info, 28 copies done. (M)

In Meditarium "Les Fleurs du Mal" CDr Soulworm Editions

First of all, I must say something about the effort Soulworm put into their releases. Even if they're just CDr's, the sleeves are usually professionally printed in full colour with colour labels on the discs and sometimes, as is the case with the In Meditarium disc, a small professionally printed booklet is enclosed. And especially since the artwork is usually superb, this is a sign of good dedication. Anyway, In Meditarium is an Ukrainian duo performing a nicely varied blend of dark ambient and 'orchestral industrial' if such a definition is allowed. There's quite a nice variety of styles presented yet it never becomes too confusing or over-the-top experimental. The skillfully layered dark ambient tracks, such as "Crossed in Love" come across as the strongest on this disc, but the more orchestral pieces, e.g. "Les Fleurs du Mal" are quite powerful as well, since there's a healthy dose of those industrial machinery rhythms to go with the otherwise simple orchestration. Conceptually In Meditarium draws influence from old literature and mysticism, and although personally I'm not too much into those themes having seen it done so many times already, it's still somehow refreshing to come across these themes instead of the usual war and Third Reich aesthetics which are becoming way too boring nowadays. (J)



In Slaughter Natives "Recollection" CD Cold Meat Industry

Put simply, this release is a taster to the now released five CD in Slaughter Natives box set that contains all four full length CD, plus a fifth CD of live, rare and newly composed tracks. Contained on this simply but effectively designed digipack CD, are eight tracks in all - two lifted from each full length In Slaughter Natives album. Without any real need to actually review the individual tracks, nonetheless this release showcases just how groundbreaking In

NOISE LABEL - CDR



The catalogue

(LS.109)	V/A (int.) "Noise Sux, volume one"
(LS.194)	blakfetus (ca) "the extreme of the end of the spectrum of human cruelty"
(LS.220)	Douglas Nine (dk) "Schmerzhaft"
(LS.231)	Fever Spoor (nl) - Filthy Turd (uk) - nxbtrex (dk) "Split"
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(LS.000)	One Thousand Pilots (es) "First"
(LS.000)	V/A (int.) "Noise Sux, volume three"
(LS.000)	V/A (int.) "We don't need no nxbtrex"
(LS.000)	Facialness (jp) - Dya (ru) - Noiseman433 (us) "Split"
(LS.000)	I Am That I Am (ca) "TBA"
(LS.000)	The Annoying Bastard (dk) "TBA"

Send me your noise if you want to be released on Legion Sudan! Submit to the on-going compilation and split series. There's no specific genre but noise (call it what you will: digital, analogue, PE, harsh, experimental, ambient, soundscapes, collage, crap, etc.) defined. If you want to make a full length for Legion Sudan or collaborate in any other way, get in touch!

Email for trades (zines, noise/music, art, etc.) and orders - legionsudan@hotmail.com
address: EVER CHANGING use web: <http://legionsudan.qjb.net>

Slaughter Natives was in defining the apocalyptic neo-classical/industrial sound, given the earliest tracks date back to 1988. This CD is not really worth your time if you already own the full lengths (apart from these tracks have been re-mastered) or you are planning on getting the box set, but otherwise this is a perfect single CD overview of what In Slaughter Natives represent for the scene. (R)
Contact: Cold Meat Industry, Villa Ekö, 59541 Mjölby, Sweden. www.coldmeat.se



Intrinsic Action "Sado-Electronics" CD BloodLust!

Re-release of a long sold out album, recorded in 1990 and originally released in 1992 by Tesco. The new edition has been digitally remastered in 1997 by the band itself and the last mastering for loudest sound has been done in 2002. Finally we have the new edition, which includes 11 of the original tracks, but also 11 new tracks from Surgical Stainless Steel (Mark Solotroff's solo project). Total playing time reaches over 74 minutes. I never managed to get the original "Sado-Electronics", so I can't compare how the mastering has changed the sound, but this sounds great. In the past I didn't like IA too much, but my opinion has changed. Also if I would have heard these before the demo recordings, the effect would have been different. The songs are rather complex with several layers of sound, different vocal styles and feedback, etc. Each track is different as a whole. Vocals are well audible, but do not dominate the noise. Often there is the spoken style, not so much of aggressive shouting. I still have a hard time understanding why Bloodminded's "Trophy" sounded how it sounded, when the stuff before and after it is so much better in comparison. Actually the SSS bonus material has some connections to "Trophy". Similar fast noise from synthesizer is used, but the highly effected vocals and painful feedback raises it to another level. There is also slower tempo, so the tracks do not all sound the same. SSS is actually one piece of text, divided into 11 short tracks. All the lyrics are printed on the cover. "Sado-Electronics" remains as the better works, but including SSS as a bonus was not a bad idea at all. (M)

Isomer "Serpent Age" CD Tesco Organisation

With the prior release of a number of self financed tapes (under the guise of Isomer or otherwise simply as David Tonkin), these showcased a burgeoning talent within the almost non-existent Australian scene. And despite the tapes being quite eclectic in scope, they did however showcase solid tracks ranging from dark ambient through to death/rhythmic/noise/experimental type industrial. Now turning to the official debut CD (and on Tesco Organisation no less) David is forging ahead with a much more focused sound and direction - here leaning towards a dark ambient/heavy electronics fusion. And with regard to this more focused pursuit, a comparison between Isomer and heavy electronics masters Inade is not too great a stretch, certainly being a worthy compliment. Opener "Star of Sarajevo" has a cold and clinical, yet deep space oriented tone, constructed with dense sound layers, slow machinery loops and alien-esque blips/sound pulses to forge an ever expanding breadth of sound (unfolding over eleven and a half minutes). This flow continues into "Omphalos", yet a heightened sense of tension is evident with the sweeping and droning sub-harmonic elements, gradually moving the piece towards a grating heavy electronics sound. "The Sun Shall Reign" begs a specific comparison to Inade with its dense ambience and tribal-esque pulse pulsing rhythm that surges in a spiralling cyclic style, until an odd vocal chants lead the track to its demise. "Every Man a Star" (could it be said of this title that some shine brighter more so than others?), is a soundscape of solar wind intensity, built with multiple sweeping layers and mildly harmonic elements, weaving its journey over an extended passage. "Red-Haired Dog" arrives as a more minimalist ambient type piece, using some rather anomalous sounds, while the following (title) track would have to be my favourite of the album. Meshing an array of static, ambient drones, slow beat and other rhythmic elements, it hits the mark perfectly. Dark, brooding and damn intense, the pinnacle is reached when a vocal sample is (Al Pacino lifted from "Scarface") is skilfully interwoven into the ambient framework. Alternately "Onflamme" chooses to conclude the CD out with an intensity not seen on other tracks, here utilising harsh and screeching heavy electronics type textures, intermixed with a solemn and damn heavy death industrial type tune. Solid stuff indeed. So, with my whining in the past that there was not enough Australian acts of the darker ambient variety, Isomer is the perfect response to this and by being released on Tesco Org. should be testament enough as to this albums quality. (R)

Izoloscope "Coagulated Wreckage" CD Spectre

Izoloscope are a new project (as far as I'm aware), with their debut CD being a corker of an album. Inhabiting a rhythmic death industrial framework (in the ballpark of Morgenstern's sound perhaps), the scathing machinations of corrosive intent are skilfully forged into compositions of decadence and decay. Drilling pistons, and idling engines housed within a slowly rusting machine room is the essence of what has been captured here - an atmosphere (fear?) derived from the soulless machines singing their metallic chorus. The title track gets things underway presenting an offering of sinister noise and crushing percussion that becomes increasingly rhythmic as it progresses - which actually becomes quite a trademark of many of the tracks here. With an aura of building noise threatening to explode at any moment (scathing sounds and distorted radio voices rising and falling sporadically), "Prime Momentum" in the end doesn't, and in the process creates a perfectly controlled on edge vibe. With a similar technique applied to the rhythmic basis of "Phobos II", this track also comes up as another striking album offering. As for the machinegun percussion of "Intermittent Cycles" is not intermittent at all, keeping its brand of high energy noise

and beats for the entire track's duration. "Winds of Minas Linea" on the other hand harks towards the sound of Stravinsky Terror, the track here evoking acidic blasts of noise and an ominously tense undercurrent. The incessant driving rhythms and type writer type beats of "Crimson Road" makes it a particularly catchy piece, that whilst could be easily played on the club floor, doesn't at all forsake its darkened and noise riddled edge. "Purge" on the other hand is another damn brutal piece of fast paced throttling beats, shrink wrapped and suffocated in veil of all out distortion (no tune or respite here). Taking an unexpected turn, the track "Izoloscope (Tomes Un)" forges sinister death ambient musings with sampled Gregorian chants and snippets of radio voices, and to attest how great the sound is this piece is comparable to Raison d'Etre's last album "The Empty Hollow Unfolds" (...yep it is damn good). For the concluding piece "Contemplating Paranoia & the Morning After", it opts for a come down of sorts using chilled out beats and subtle drifting sounds creates an almost relaxing atmosphere - if it were not for those ominous elements lurking in the background! Despite Spectre's previous releases having been limited to vinyl only, with the three recent items all being released exclusively on CD - and all being fantastic (Olhon and Frames a Second are the other two items), it should bring the label a much wider prominence they deserve - not to mention raising the profile of the artists in question. Again very commendable. (R)

Jazzkammer "Sound of Music" 3"mCD Ohm Records

The Norwegian noisers recorded this while touring in Japan. John Hegre plays computers, guitar and electronics and Lasse Marhaug plays minidisc and computer. The rest of the 2 guys contribute only to the live video and tour managing. If you ask me, when looking at the instruments they "play", it seems amazingly lame. Computer and minidisc? Well, you'll be surprised how good it actually sounds. Over 20 minutes of experimental noise. There's always a decent amount of harsh distorted noise sounds going on, but also wonderful loops of weird droning or other little cleaner sounds of various sources. The harsh stuff is really crisp, bright and loud. The drones, hums and loops make great backgrounds. It doesn't really sweeten this, just makes it more diverse and complex. The first 10 minutes are the best, but the rest isn't bad either. The CD is in a small full color cardboard covers with such nature photos that you'd never expect this kind of noise to appear in it. (M)

JGS (Just Glittering)

Nice to see an interesting 'zine coming out of the U.K. When I receive a 'zine from the U.K. I mostly don't have high hopes. It's because of the Victorian suppression there. Most editors are very careful so it's not entirely their fault. Another exception is Headpress. A comics 'zine like Topaz sucks muleballs. A waste of rainforest and time that I could have been spending in a smutbooth (only kidding). This 'zine is very good. It's xeroxed on pink A4 paper. It's not a dead serious noise 'zine like Degenerate (hal) but more in the style of Bananafish. (That's where I discovered an ad of this 'zine. I traded it for my own 'zine LIQUID LOBSTER SEX.) JGS has some dude on the cover with a Mexican wrestling mask and a gap between his front teeth. The inside backcover has a pic of some Nazis running through a street which appears to be the ghetto of Krakau. I think it's a pic from Schindler's List. The dude in charge resembles Dennis Hopper but it can be Ralph Fiennes. Anyway, not many pics in this 'zine. Mainly text and information. The interview with Milovan Srdanovic of Smell & Quim is quite funny. In the intro the editor writes that this interview is done in the old school JG style. That means: silly multiple choice questions and the interviewee can add additional comments. Example: You awake one morning with a violent hangover in a strange room and in a strange bed. Lying next to you is a seventy six year old woman in a pink nightie, fast asleep, head back, mouth wide open, no dentures and a rampant varicose veins. Do you a.) get dressed as quickly and as possible and leave immediately? b.) give her one up the tradesman's? c.) look on it as an opportunity to practice coprophagia and gerontophilia in unison? d.) other. Milovan's answer: This sounds like every morning! For the rest of his answer contact JG and purchase a copy. Do it quickly 'cause this issue is the final issue. Also a lot of reviews, an e-mail from Andy Bolus of Evil Moisture and graphiscum mega 'zine Hospital Brut. Very funny is the intro of "JG remembers when... packaging was king" which contains a review of "The Four Shines" 4x40 release on G.R.O.S.S. in 1995. "Remember those days when anything came wrapped in dead fish or sandpaper was enough to have you jacking off for days on end and then it suddenly dawned on you that you didn't played the damned thing yet?" And much much more. (YA)
Contact: JG, 17 Broomfield Terrace, Westgate, Cleckheaton, West Yorkshire, BD19 6AH, UK. idwalfisher@aol.com

Jojo Hiroshige "Ikiteiru Kachi Nashi - The Very Best of Jojo Hiroshige" CD Alchemy Records

At first this could be shock to some Hijokaidan / Jojo Hiroshige fans who have only heard the early works. They were total guitar noise with shouting vocals. Later solo albums, especially "Crimson Voyage" CD presented new sides of Jojo. Psychedelic noise/music, with feedback, percussion, guest female vocals etc. This CD is very varied. 1st track Jojo performs with a band. There are normal rock drums and bass, some guitar noise and spoken vocals. 2nd track is sheer noise in old Jojo vein. String abuse and screaming/shouting voice. 3rd track offers heavy percussion and experimental instruments used with spoken vocals. 4th one is again typical Jojo solo work with total guitar abuse. No unnecessary effects, no fancy playing. He just grabs the guitar, pushed distortion on, and abuses the strings with whirlwind fingers. Usually no drones, no feedback, just chaotic string torture. This best of compilation is a good way to start, if you are not sure if you are willing to hear jojo sinukara" CD offers, or if not sure if the psychedelic/experimental side is your cup of tea. I like them all. It doesn't reach intensity of Hijokaidan, though. (M)

Jub Noise CD

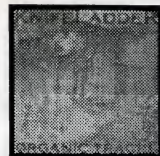
Another disc which shouldn't have been sent to Degenerate for a review. The artist apparently is originally from Slovakia and now living in the U.K. and this disc is claimed to be some sort of a political act on his behalf. I won't go into further detail about the

concept, since I couldn't be less interested in it. The material is pretty experimental electronic music, moving somewhere between C64 game music, abstract hard core techno and maybe power noise. The sounds are pretty harsh and distorted indeed, but most of it just sounds stupid to my ears. I think these tracks are available for download on the internet and even the CDr seem to be free. Still I'd avoid this. (J)

Contact: www.jubnoise.co.uk

Kloft Retarder CD Verato Project

If I remember correctly, this German outfit used to work under the name Krachgau, but I'm not sure if I've ever actually heard their material, nor had I heard Kloft Retarder prior to this CDr release, again in a nice full colour sleeve as usual with Verato Project releases. The first track, "Alfredo Garcia's Headless Body" introduces a very organic sound with almost tribal percussion and layers of guitar drones and feedback, being a very basic yet effective piece. "Induced Drag Scenario 2" is more based on the feedback sounds and very high frequency sounds in general, backed up by some bass drones. Definitely a hard one on the ears when listened at a loud volume, but somehow a bit powerless despite the irritating sounds. "Leprosy ?" offers a less improvised approach with some abrasive loops maintaining a certain structure. Kloft Retarder use some really interesting sounds reminding me of disfunctional home electronics or power tools as well as some scrap metal sounds, and the result is nicely organic compared to a lot bands today. "Induced Drag Scenario 3" follows along similar paths as the previous part, with high pitched waves of sounds on top of a lower, droning background. "End of the Fact" closes this disc with a peculiar harsh ambient piece, again containing those tribal percussions mentioned earlier. The atmosphere is really good and this definitely is the best track on the disc. All in all, after listening to this release, I have pretty mixed feelings about Kloft Retarder. Apart from a few great moments, there is a lot of pretty useless material here. Still, I'd like to hear more of their material in the future. (J)



Knifeladder "Organic Traces" CD Operative Records

Whilst Knifeladder might not be massively known name at the moment, the buzz they have been generating in the underground over the last couple of years is proof enough that they are producing something entirely unique with a broad ritual industrial/tribal experimental sound. Being three years in the making, this is the debut full length for the project, achieved through a process of composition and improvisation, or to put it in the words of the group themselves: "Knifeladder is an ongoing electronic, organic project utilising elements of live improvisation and cyclic repetition to produce music to break down the confines of conventional structure". Featuring John Murphy on vocals, drums, percussion & loops, Andrew Trill on electronics, samples, vocals & moroccan horn and Hunter Barr on bass & electronics, Knifeladder through their experimentation have produced an intensely woven melange of sound.

"Red Drum" the opening track is urgent and roughly hewn, being a pounding percussive/plodding bass affair, including textural sound loops and wailed vocals of John that recite the track's title to create a strong introduction indeed. Yet it is on the following track "Faultline" that the album takes a step back in pace, containing a slow ritual industrial pulse built on sparse percussion, bass melody, samples and random sounds, with Andrew taking the vocal lead in an almost spoken word delivery.

Haunting and tensile, "Scorched Earth" commences as a cyclic dirge, overlaid with sporadic loops and percussion that gradually builds over the track's duration. Consequently by the time the track concludes (towards the seven minute mark), it had morphed into a stunning mass of rolling sound and heavy martial drumming (vocals here handled again by Andrew reciting lines such as "my father's father's sins are mine...carried in my blood").

Fourth track "Ossian Window" commences with ritualised dark ambient aura, yet is later fleshed out with slightly more musical structure and percussion then someone would normally expect from the dark ambient scene. The atmosphere of this track is less tensile then other album cuts given its free form flow, carried along by the hymn like vocals of John and disharmonic tones of the moroccan horn.

Easily my favourite track of the album, "The Wilderness of Mirrors" is a hypnotic soundscape of faint bass melodies, swirling loops and mantra like vocal delivery of John. Over its duration it undertakes a full metamorphosis from ritual soundscape to a full blown driving percussive track, with the addition of the wailing moroccan horn creating a particularly haunting effect.

Commencing with a sickening and lurching death industrial type tone, "Feline" surges forth from the speakers with clanging loops, indecipherable vocal treatments. Again this piece uses an evolving, layering technique to build the intense atmosphere, here using free form percussion, cyclic loops and tectonic bass layers as the main focal elements.

Final album track "Dervish" is determined not to conclude the album quietly, rather opting to build intensity via electronic loops and John's vocal walls being delivered in an extremely spiteful and harsh manner. Matching the intensity of the track's introductory segment, the hammering drums later kick in and surge forward incessantly, loosely followed by bass lines and metallic loops, again using the moroccan horn to evoke an esoteric aura (...undeniably a grand final declaration).

"Unconventional" was probably the first word that sprang to mind when I first listened to this disc, yet this can only be a positive impression given the broad industrial scene is currently suffering from a glut of copyists not bringing forth anything new or of particular worth. Being a release that is difficult to categorise within any particular scene, it nonetheless is an extremely solid

and intense album that deserves wide attention. (R)
Contact: www.operative-records.co.uk

Knurl "Kurtosis" CDr
Harshnoise.com

Knurl has been doing this for a long time and still today they remain pretty much the same, and equally good! Rather lo-fi and very fascinating sound and noise is loud abuse of scrap metal. For my ears it's always great to hear people using some (even if traditional) "physical" sound sources. You can smell the rusty and dirty smell of physical noise making when Knurl violates your ears with great combinations of sounds from different objects. Color cover, the CDr label is similar to real CD's and even the jewelbox is in shrink wrap. (M)

Contact: www.harshnoise.com

Komafuzz CDr

Judging by the name of the band, I had already prepared myself for the worst, in other words yet another boring 'rhythm n' noise' disc, but Komafuzz managed to surprise me by being closer to an experimental harsh noise hybrid instead of just another distorted beatbox monger. The opening track let me down a bit though, by including some stupid 'comical' sounds and effects in what would have otherwise been pretty good noise with some more quiet experimental passages. The second one, "The Wind Blows Calmly" is a lot better with a calmer approach, loops and low frequency feedback. There are some harsher elements and effects, so I wouldn't really call it ambient in the purest sense, but its pretty close anyway. Track three starts off in a similar way with some low end feedback and some effects on it, but as the track develops, the ambience starts breaking with short bursts of heavy noise, eventually going into a looped harsh industrial sound and then back to more ambient again. A really great track! The fourth track, "Act One" is a live recording and appears to be pretty much improvised. Over 12 minutes of bass, guitar and vocal abuse along with some electronics, and not even a noisy way, but more like in a 'weird' way, so not too interesting for me. The final track, "Neurological Hex" begins with some painful sounding feedback manipulations. Really intense frequencies. The feedback is looped and layered, eventually going into full blast harsh noise. Nicely constructed yet heavy on the ears. I must say this CDr was a nice surprise and included some really good stuff, but also some pretty uninteresting and mediocre material. It's good to do a variety of styles, but listening to this disc pretty much shows which styles Komafuzz should really concentrate on. (J)

Contact: komafuzz@hotmail.com



K2 "Flake Nitro" CDr
Harshnoise.com

The first release of harshnoise.com which is a site that mostly introduces you equipment that can be used for creating harsh noise. It's focused on equipment that perhaps appeals to the noise/power electronic/experimental musician; concentrating mostly on pedal effects and other noisy stuff. I think there are 2 ways to see this. First, it's good to hear opinions from some noise creator about specific equipment. If you ask a shop owner whether some particular guitar pedal is suitable for this-and-this purpose, he probably doesn't understand what you're talking about. But secondly, I'd say it feeds to the view that harsh noise should be effect pedal based. I'd assume that no one believes good noise actually demands a table full of effects. I've personally never had a distortion pedal in my life, except as a part of a multi effect. Very minimal equipment leads to more inventive use of original sound and I'd like to believe that harsh noise created from junk metal or any other of a million sound sources becomes more interesting than internal feedback of the effect pedals. And at this point, we get to the actual record: K2 is a good example of a band who uses source sounds in a great way. He has his own sound and style to abuse metal objects and combine painful electronic noise to it. This is more complex/varied creation than (still amazing) "The Rust" CD or "Metal Dysplasia" CD because of the high amount of electronics used besides the junk sounds. Sometimes the electronics create a humming sound where clean and noisy pounding metal object sound (=no effects) creates a primitive industrial atmosphere. Two over 23 minute tracks give this CD a perfect playing time. Even if I highly recommend purchasing this CDr, I must still have one word of criticism. I have begun to dislike the standardization of noise. It was great when Pure/RRR did 50+ CDs with similar covers. Ground Fault continued the same idea, yet little developed and it still works. But now I see even more noise coming in series with nearly similar cover designs, colors etc. Only changing are the details of the artwork and texts. Why standardize noise? Covers are a part of the personality of the band and hopefully an exciting part of the release, and it becomes dull if you get a pile of CDs and it looks like you're watching milk cartons in the shop. Sure you recognize the brand immediately, but it's always the same design you'll see everyday and it becomes dull after a while. (M)

Land:Fire "Gone" LP
Power & Steel

There is little information forthcoming about this new Power & Steel/Loki Foundation project Land:Fire, however this LP does adhere rather well to the tried and true sound of these labels. Inhabiting the heavy electronics sound of early Inade and

Predominance releases, this LP likewise has an instant effect of taking me back to the time when I first discovered the aforementioned groups (which can only be a good thing!). From the commencement of opening track 'first mesa', all the right elements are there: the galactic drones, shimmering textures, ominous and dense sound structures: yet it is the scattered digital sounds that evokes a clinical and alien feel, as opposed to an archaic type aura. With the stage set early on, the remaining 7 tracks pursue variations on this theme over the 40 odd minutes of music. Each track being around 3-6 minutes in length the direction and variation of each composition is limited, instead establishing its niche early on and morphing slightly over the duration by utilising a layering/ building technique. The track 'Before they are sent' is particularly good with fractured rhythms and ominous mechanical pulses, as a lone radio voice sporadically surfaces within the mix. The track 'land:fire' on the other hand takes a low key approach of menacing drones and stilted mechanical loops which reminds me quite heavily of stratum terror's first album, as does the following track 'as night fell over'. Final two album tracks conclude the album with a brooding sonic aesthetic, choosing to suffocate the listener with layered drones and shifting clinical/ digital textures. Whilst Land:Fire have created an LP that is not entirely groundbreaking, this is certainly solid material and worth more than a cursory listen. (R)

Lefthandeddecision "You Ruined Me" 2xCard CDr
PACrec

Two c. 4 minute CDr's inside a hand stamped envelope. It says this is a live recording, but not sure if it's in front of an audience or just live in studio? Strong and massive harsh noise with some vocal noises. Thick sound keeps rumbling with heavy bass end and crisp high end, but doesn't offer too much details besides the vocal noises on top. Both discs have identical content, so it could have been an 8 minute track on one 3" CDr. Limited to 15 copies. (M)



Legion "Zodiac" CDr
Auf Abwegen

Legion was quite unknown to me prior to this CD, but apparently the artist behind it, Andrew Lagowski has already released four albums under this name and has also worked with Lustmord and SPK in the early 80s. The influence of Lustmord is also quite evident on this CD. Legion presents five tracks of dark ambient with the very traditional, but still effective elements: long and deep echoes reminding of endless bleak tunnels or caves, peculiar trickling sounds and noises which float in and out, and occasional human-like voices which nonetheless are deformed beyond recognition. Very traditional indeed, but I must say Legion succeeds



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in making the best of these elements. The soundscapes have lots of space and dimension, and also seem to be constantly moving into a new direction so that there's no feeling of repetition or boredom. Definitely a CD worth checking out if you enjoy dark ambient! (J)

Contact: Auf Abwegen, P.O.Box 100152, 50441 Cologne, Germany. www.aufabwegen.com

Life Without Sex Magazine

This issue is #1 of a new French magazine dealing with noise, especially with Japanese noise. Like most French 'zines, this publication is in both French and English (think of Timeless magazine). The Japanese artists featured in this issue are Aube (with four colour prints of his artwork taken from his "Triad Thread" CD, amongst unreleased material), Incapacitants, Government Alpha, The Gerogerigegege and K2. Some interviews seem to be taken from other 'zines. For instance the Incapacitants interview dates to 1993. Some date to 2000. In his defence of using old interviews the editor explains that the interviews are documents that represent the true core and ideas of the bands and that they remain important through the years. Also Mikko A. (!) of Degenerate is quoted saying: "...editor doesn't have journalist education neither wide English vocabulary" in the foreword. It's funny to read an interview conducted by some French dude who doesn't master the English language with a Japanese artist who answers the questions in hilarious English as well. K2's interview is again very entertaining. It's a well presented 'zine. The xeroxes are high quality and the layout is good as well without trying too hard to be "professional". Only the colour prints of Aube glued on the pages makes it a bit amateurish. Interesting interviews as well, especially The Gerogerigegege interview. He is a crazy dude! But if you already know these bands, and that chance is big because they are the most well known Japanese artists there are in the genre, you will not discover anything new. I don't see the point of promoting these bands since they already are the top in Japanese noise and that's the philosophy of this 'zine: "Promote the works of noise (or 'harsh experimental music') bands/projects and only for the sake of it." I hope to see some real promoting of possible interesting new bands in the future. (YA)

Contact: Bärm Balta, B.P. 35, F-31110 Luchon, France.

LS-TTL "43 Hz (Note: F1)" 3"CDr

Ad Noiseam

Another exponent of the growing US scene, LS-TTL return with a mere morsel of new material after their debut on Dragon Flight Recordings last year. With a single track clocking in at 21 minutes, much the same themes and sounds as encapsulated on the full length are explored here (for those unawares LS-TTL work within the broad genre of dark ambient). Evoking non melodic glacial atmospheres via mechanical sounding means, the piece meanders forth by gradually looping and inter-linking sections with seeming ease. Tension is also continually built throughout, yet remains relatively subdued in volume, opting rather to increase the intensity of those sounds and loops that are present within the mix. No doubt this is a good listen and certainly on par (if not above) the material of the debut, but with a limited run of 75 hand numbered copies, few will get the opportunity to evaluate this for themselves. (R)

Luasa Raelon "80000v" CDr

Snip-Snip

I didn't check the cover info before listening to the CDr. It leaves you with an open mind when you don't know much about the composer. It happened to be Mr. David Reed (see reviews of "Lupine" on earlier issues), label boss himself. I can congratulate him for doing one of the best Snip-Snip CDr's! Especially the 1st track totally destroys. Great low / midtone electronic sound and junk metals etc. on the front. Just a killer track. Can't describe it any better. The rest of the CD isn't bad, but the 1st track sets the level so high, that the rest of the 5 tracks don't rise to the same level. Nevertheless, the whole disc offers you a good dose of electronic noise, not always abrasive, but never loses intensity. (M)

Magmax "Magmatron" 10" + 12" Box Set 220N

A division of Hands Productions released this luxurious box set including a 10" of studio material and a 12" with live stuff. The studio material is better this time. The live doesn't capture any additional violent atmospheres compared to studio, it only lacks the sound quality and the dry talking/shouting vocals on one side don't sound too good. With screaming parts they are very good, but that is only a minority. I have heard other Magmax stuff and I have to say that sometimes they succeed very well, other times it's only mediocre. The sound is very close to some old MSBR when they relied more on electronic noise. The 10" is decent electronic noise. Always a few layers of heavy noise wall creating an interesting result. The live has vocals but the flat sound doesn't make the noise as good as the studio work. Those who like old MSBR, they will like this Magmax release. Those who expect more of western power electronics feeling that some Magmax releases have, won't find it here. (M)

Contact: www.handsproductions.com



Maison Close "s/t" CDr

Force Majeure

Maison Close is a new French outfit whose debut release - already recorded in 1998-99 - has now seen the light of day via Force Majeure. This CD is an attempt at making a soundtrack for the classic film Johnny Got His Gun. Prior to having heard the actual CD and just knowing about the theme, I couldn't help but think about Metallica's track "One" which is also based on the same film and the video includes scenes from it. Luckily Maison Close

has managed to be less cheesy in dealing with the concept, but still the aforementioned track lurks somewhere at the back of my head when I listen to this CD. This disc builds up from rather minimal death industrial and dark ambient atmospheres to a more noisy and power electronics based sound reaching its climax at the end. There are a lot of samples which often are long bits of speech or dialogue instead of just cut up pieces here and there. At times that annoys me since there may just be a silent drone in the background with minutes of dialogue on top of it. Anyway, around the 6th track things start happening and the sound gets radically fuller and more violent. In the last tracks, some distorted vocals replace the samples and the sounds go more towards walls of noise. All in all this is a very good debut from an interesting newcomer, but I was a bit let down by the rather unimaginative choice of 'making a soundtrack' for an existing film. (J)

Contact: Force Majeure, BP 197, 59029 Lille Cedex, France.

Malpa "Primate Electronics" CDr

Propulsive

Decent noise from a rather unknown artist. 9 tracks which offer harsh but experimental noise. Sometimes Malpa also includes vocals over dense noise walls, but nothing too aggressive. I think many of the tracks fall into the ocean of mediocre recordings. Maybe a good point is that they are not the most typical, but it doesn't excite me except in a couple of the tracks. Distorted drum machine, distorted babbling, various electronics. At its best Malpa is in the last track. It combines dark ambient tones with experimental noises and some quite harsh moments. The length of the track is over 10 minutes, so it raises the overall impression of the CDr a lot. (M)

Contact: Propulsive, P.O.Box 22, Vernon, TX 76385, USA.

Man Manly "So Mato Sens" CDr

Sonik Alchemy

Here's another new acquaintance from the U.S., presenting very D.I.Y. spirit CDr releases. I have a real hard time describing the material of Man Manly, but simply put it's a mixture of experimental ambient, musique concrete and electro-acoustic music. Mostly it's a sound collage filled with different sounds; monotonous pianos, drones, voices, field and object recordings, concrete sounds, etc. Although there are elements which could be seen as melodic, there hardly ever are any real melodies to follow, just sounds which add up to a very rich texture creating a very meditative atmosphere. This is where "So Mato Sens" is at its best. At its worst the random sounds just appear here and there, never really becoming anything but random bits and pieces, eventually becoming pretty annoying. The best parts on this CDr felt to me as the best experimental ambient I've heard in a long time, but unfortunately the bad parts spoiled it too much. A nice surprise though. (J)

Contact: sonikalchemy@yahoo.com

Man Manly "Shortwave Sessions Vol 1" CDr

Sonik Alchemy

Another CDr from this unknown U.S. act. I believe this time they have been using less sound sources and I'm guessing this might be more improvised, as the disc contains only one 45 minute track which basically at several points sounds like an improvised session. I'm not really sure about the sound sources here, but assuming by the title and at least most of the sounds, they've used shortwave radios or something. There are some parts in the track which sound promising, as if they were starting a passage which would later develop into something great, but instead they just do that promising bit for a while and then turn to some utter nonsense. Most of the material on this disc is just pretty dull improvised electronics, uninspired and lacking any point whatsoever. (J)

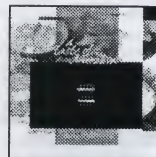
Masami Akita & Russell Haswell "Satanstornade" CD

Warp Records

This is a collaboration work between Masami Akita (Merzbow) and Russell Haswell, both being respected and very prolific artists in the noise scene, especially the one leaning towards the use of laptops over more traditional electronics and junk. The material was recorded in one live session already in 1999, but for some reason it hasn't been released until now in 2002. I have often expressed my dislike towards the whole laptop noise thing and

even though the sounds on this collaboration really aren't that different from the 'old school' sounds, it still doesn't appeal to me. On the other hand, nevertheless the sounds, the material is pretty mediocre and fails to come across as anything more than just another noise recording. The spectrum of sounds is focused around low and mid frequencies all the time, and there's hardly a trace of any over-the-top extreme high pitched feedback - style noises in here. Even though I like the dynamics of the tracks quite a lot, especially considering they must be improvised to a large extent, the actual point is left missing. I'm happy to say that the usual laptop style 'noise-silence-clicks-noise' thing hasn't been used on this recording, so it's pretty straightforward noise from start to finish, but that's it. If you're happy listening to anything Akita, Haswell or Warp Records releases, then go and get this, but otherwise I consider this a very mediocre release. (J)

Contact: www.warprecords.com



Merzbow "A Taste of..." CDr

Mego

This must be the first full length release I've heard from Merzbow after he started using a laptop. Here Masami Akita makes an homage to Japanese cuisine, presenting four tracks, each representing one dish. I will disregard this idiotic concept immediately and simply focus on dealing with the actual noise. The digital sound is easy to notice straight from the beginning as being much sharper and definitely 'cleaner' compared to the electronics Merzbow was using before. Nonetheless, the fact that it's all digital hasn't even been attempted to keep hidden here, so maybe that's a positive thing. The sound spectrum is pretty focused around mid frequencies all throughout the disc, so there's not much low end rumble nor high pitched feedback - style noise. Needless to say, it tends to decrease the strength of the tracks towards the end. Somehow I find this to be a pretty run-of-the-mill release, especially since Akita has such a massive amount of releases behind him and since most of them sound a lot more inspired and better than this one. It's really hard to say whether this is good or bad; it's just another Merzbow release. Decide for yourself. (J)

Contact: www.mego.at

Merzbow "Hummingbird" 7"

L.S.D. Organisation

In this 7" Merzbow uses a cut up soundfile from "Three Little Orchestral Pieces" from '64 and I guess he mutilated it with his laptop. Even if I was highly sceptic, I have to admit that he has not lost the touch totally. There's no way this could be compared to Merzbow's classic records, but has plenty of screeching noise reminding of his mid 90's days and some strange orchestral loops which brings early Merzbow style to my mind. The sound is not heavily layered. It relies on one sound at a time. The pace is fast, so it changes enough, but still a little one dimensional compared to his best stuff. A 45rpm 7" doesn't offer a long playing time, but if you find this for a decent price, I would say it's still worth buying. (M)

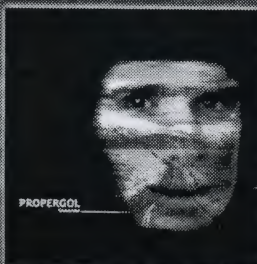
Contact: www.lsd.org

Michael Nine "Self Medicated" 3"CDr

Neural Release

I bet Mk9 will remain labelled as "ex-Death Squad" for years. That's what I do in this review too. I think DS reached so far with creating original sound that it was a shame the project was terminated. Michael Nine continues pretty much in the same vein, but there is no samples or vocals - at least not this time. So it sounds less "power electronics" and more painful electronic sound art. Or could

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Sensation:

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Report:

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it be labelled as instrumental power electronics? You could think this is actually a return backwards. To the early Death Squad form, where the focus was in the noise sound, not in vocals/samples. Well, anyway, the whole spectrum of sound from the lowest to the ultra high painful sound, and something in between. It's always very clean. No tape hiss, no lo-fi muddy sound, just digitally clean. It works for him perfectly. The abundance of carefully adjusted high pitched sound that would not be audible if the production was lo-fi. Even if there are 4 tracks listed on the cover, there are 5. The 3rd and 4th are short ones without nothing drastic happening. While most of the tracks are focusing on the highest sound you can create with a synthesizer, the last one starts low. If you listen at a silent volume, you won't even notice that the track started, until it gets louder in the end. It's also the best and longest one (7min) from the disc. I like this. I'm sure most of those who like Death Squad will like this as well. I don't know how limited this 3" CDr is, but I'd recommend to order quick. (M)

Mimetic "Sensitive" 2CD Parametric

Mimetic is one of those acts which at times come up with material that sounds fairly interesting to my ears and on the other hand mostly offer stuff which I can't stand at all. This double CD contains a bit of both. The material is a lot more based on heavy beats and rhythmic structures than what I've heard from Mimetic before. There are some really intense moments here and there throughout the two discs which manage to sound really good and harsh without going into overly distorted power noise. Then again 95% of the material is just pretty dull beats and distorted melody loops. The voice samples on the first disc brought a nice addition to the sound, but were hardly able to make the boring moments any more interesting. There isn't much I want to say about this release, since it's definitely not my type of stuff, but I'm sure that those who enjoy this type of material will buy it in spite of what I say. (J)
Contact: www.parametric.info

Mlada Fronta "Oxydes" 2CD Parametric

First of all, this is definitely not the kind of stuff we usually cover in Degenerate, nor are we interested in this type of music in general, but since this arrived as a promo for a review, I'll give it one. As far as I know, Mlada Fronta is a French outfit, performing the sort of rhythmical, techno-influenced yet at times harsh stuff that's pretty popular in Europe these days. Not as monotonous and boring as the most "harsh" power noise acts around, but still far too techno and beat oriented to make an impression on me. The tracks have been structured really nicely and as a matter of fact, the style differs from track to track in a very enjoyable way, so that the most irritating things usually don't repeat themselves too many times on this CD. Besides the actual album, there is a second CD included with remixes from e.g. Tarmvred and Mimetic, and the disc also includes a few video tracks of Mlada Fronta's live performances. The remixes hardly bring anything spectacularly different to the whole thing, and the videos just add a little multimedia value to the package. Talking about the packaging, the double-CD digipak is really beautiful, filled with some nice industrial photography etc. Anyway, that doesn't help to make this release more my cup of tea, so I see no point in bitching about it anymore. (J)

Mnem "For Delta Relics" CD Kaos Kontrol

Mnem uses reel-to-reel tape-loops in their sound creation. It gives them a charming rather lo-fi sound and great atmosphere. There are amazing soundscapes. Sometimes calm, sometimes noisier, often sounds of junk metal and electronic gadgets looped and processed into Mnem style of industrial / ambient-noise. I love the sound of "concrete" objects. No synths, no samples. Just difficult and physical creation of sound. This has been compared to some works of MB, Maeror Tri and Illusion of Safety. I have heard about a dozen releases from the two first mentioned and less from Illusion of Safety, but I would still say this is definitely Mnem sound. In the scene of dozens and dozens of copycats, it's great to see that the Finnish scene has been a source for many great artists/bands doing somehow their own type of stuff. Even if Mnem is not exactly "noise", I'd say any noise fanatic could also pay attention to this. Same goes for "ambient". Kaos Kontrol has also done a good job with the covers. Recruiting Stephen O'Malley and invested some extra euros for luxurious metal color printing! (M)
Contact: Kaos Kontrol, Poste Restante, 20360 Turku, Finland.
www.kaos-kontrol.org

Morva "Glorification of Nothing" CD Tabula Rasa

A black DVD box with nothing but black paper as a cover, a black band CDr with a printed label. Only 50 copies have been made, but it looks very nice and professional. The sound is harsh noise, but created only with electronics. No feedback, no raw distorted junk etc. I'd say it reminds me of late 90s Merzbow when he used to create the stuff with an analog synthesizer, but kept it rather loud and painful. Morva's sound is digitally clean, but good. I'd hope a filthier distortion and other sources combined to electronics, but probably cold and electronic deadly sound is what they want. Already like this, I'd say that they remain one of the nicest surprises from Italy recently. (M)
Contact: morvadisease@yahoo.it

Mourmansk 150 "Psoriasis Gyrata" 3"CD Tabula Rasa

4 tracks in 20 minutes. Mourmansk 150 brings to mind the German band Viktim Kennel. Thick power electronics wall with some samples and a voice which is strangely distorted and not too powerful. M150 has improved a lot and this is good stuff to listen to, but more variation wouldn't hurt. The noise starts very well, strong and heavy, but there are no changes, highlights etc. (M)



Mourmansk 150 "Logic of War" LP Blade Records

M150's first big vinyl. It continues in the same way as the latest CDr's. Thick distorted power electronics noise. I think about half of the tracks on the LP are decent. Simple, slightly rhythmic electronic noise walls with some samples or vocals or additional sounds on the back. But then again, included are some really dull vocal effects, which make them sound like a cartoon character. Little things like these spoil the overall impression. M150 is at their best probably in the long title track of the LP. In general, I wish they'd include more details and layers to make it more interesting. Now it is ok. Shows some potential, but leaves a little empty feeling afterwards. For example if there was a combination of the last track and the first track (without vocals) it would probably be a satisfying result. (M)

Mr. Natural / ManGenerated / Praying for Oblivion Split CDr RRs.R

Here's a nicely done low profile split and collaboration CDr featuring three more or less underground acts. Mr. Natural launches the disc with "Print Sustaining Surface" which is a slowly growing harsh ambient piece; starting off as minimal rumble and eventually growing into abrasive and monotonous layers. Not much diversity nor surprises, but still a fine track and the best one on this CDr. The second track is a collaboration between the three acts, recorded in Belgium, 2001. Droning harsh ambience with nice revolving elements and some more concrete sounds. Great low end and dense layers of sound in general. Next up are three tracks by ManGenerated which I didn't like at all. They're pretty hard to define, but I'd say it's somehow experimental with almost random drum machine beats and instrument abuse. Not really noisy. More like improvised and annoying. Praying for Oblivion are featured with a live track recorded in Czech Republic, 2001. A bit too standard noise with occasional muddy and flanged shouts reminding me of early Con-Dom, yet unfortunately the noise is nowhere near as good. Not sure if it's because of the recording, but everything sounds a bit too weak to really cause an impact. Anyway, this was a pretty nice CDr, reminding me a lot of all those small tape releases some years ago. (J)

Contact: RRs.R, Kwadestraat 19, 3320 Hoegaarden, Belgium.
mangenerated@hotmail.com

MSBR "Difteria Cutanea" 3"CD Tabula Rasa

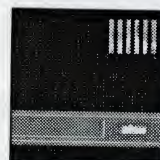
This is the 6th part in the Dermatology Series and includes one 14 minute track by MSBR, entitled "The Final Harsh Work #23". It's pretty hard to say anything specific about this track actually. It's definitely not over-the-top loud nor extremely fast; instead it's just layers and layers of distorted noise. Sometimes static and sometimes totally unsettling and random. Very dynamic and indeed a good track, but not necessarily the best I've heard from MSBR. Limited edition of 100 copies. (J)

Murder Corporation "Zerstörung der Ohren" CDr Spatter Productions

Re-release of a tape from 1994. It's divided to 13 tracks in a total of almost 60 minutes of noise. I'm still enthusiastic about Murder Corporation's primitive approach to noise. Yes, sometimes MC is referred as power electronics, but especially this release I'd call plain noise. The first couple tracks are less interesting drum machine or keyboard - whatever - experiments. Then strikes the metal junk abuse. It's hardly edited at all. All material on this CDr seems to be live-on-tape recordings. No overdubs can be heard, except sometimes there are different things happening in each channel. The CDr is full of dirty feedback and lo-fi electronics, spoken fragments and junk (metal?) abuse. It's exactly what I expect from a noise tape from '94. Despite the occasional useless moments, at it's best it creates an atmosphere which is very different from the digital computer creations of today, which often bore me with their artificial and clean approach. The CDr comes in a DVD case with full color artwork about mushroom clouds. Limited to 120 copies. (M)

Mürnau "Misanthropy" Picture 7" 220N

Prior to this 7" I had only heard Mürnau on the Deafness is Not a Gift compilation on Deafborn Records and the track didn't strike me as being anything special. This picture vinyl has been released on 220N which is a sub-label of the rather prominent Hands Productions and it features two tracks. "Null" is a more rhythmical piece which somehow blends traditional power electronics with the more modern power noise sound. Luckily it still has a more dirty sound than most of the power noise acts and there are some pretty upfront vocals as well. An okay track, but maybe lacks a bit depth in the sounds. "Void" is a straight forward harsh noise track with heavily distorted synth and electronics abuse, again lacking a bit in the low end. With more bass rumble this would have been a really intense track and definitely the better one of the two. All in all this is a pretty safe release with nothing new or special, but if you like to hear new bands doing the traditional stuff all over again, check this out. Limited edition of 400 copies. (J)



Mürnau "Recoil" 7" Deafborn Records

Another 7" release from Mürnau within a short period of time. This time featured are three tracks, all quite similar to the first track on the previous 7", "Misanthropy"; i.e. a sort of a mixture of power electronics and power noise. "Illuminati" opens the disc with a very harsh rhythmical loop going all the way through the track, accompanied by some aggressive vocals and noises. Although it's all very distorted and intense, the spectrum of sounds is pretty dull and the track gets boring towards the end. The same thing happens with the second track, "Halcyon". The rhythm is a bit slower and the accompanying noise is better compared to the first track, but otherwise it follows a very similar pattern. Luckily it's shorter, thus managing to retain at least some of its intensity. The last track "Remission" starts off similar to the others, but the sounds are noisier and somehow more dirty. Also, the vocals have more distortion than in the other tracks and in my opinion sound their best here. Undoubtedly the best track off this 7". Again, I didn't find this disc to be anything special, but an okay release in its own right. (J)
Contact: www.deafborn.de

Mushroom's Patience "The Spirit of the Mountain" CD Hau Ruck/Tesco Distribution

Although Mushroom's Patience have been around in various forms since 1985, it is a more recent group Novy Svet that would give readers a starting reference point to the musical weirdness and down right quirkiness of this album. Likewise this comparison goes much deeper given that both members of Novy Svet have contributed and collaborated on this CD (and I also suspect it is they who are part of the reason as to why this release ended up on the Hau Ruck label).

Defying convention of any actual scene (other than the niche carved by Novy Svet perhaps?), this album simply exists in its own sphere - and a rather drug hazed, hallucinogenic one it is too. Basic programmed rhythms & beats, looped/ scattered noise, vague guitar tunes, keyboard melodies and meandering trumpet tunes all intermingle to form the basis of the compositions, whilst the vocals where present are delivered in a lethargic manner (and almost in the form of drunken ramblings). Likewise there is a loose feel to how the tracks have been constructed, leaving me wondering to if they were written in the studio, or even partly improvised during the recording process. Yet when this perception is viewed in context, it is such a feel which adds to the overall charm, whilst creating a vibe that is reminiscent of nonsensical children's stories. Some tracks being uptempo and playful, others slow and down beat, much territory is pursued over the 14 tracks and 64 minutes - but what is the meaning of the actual pursuit I can hardly begin to imagine!

Obviously this is not going to be for everyone, but this review should at least give a hint to if you would glean something positive from this or not. Recommended? - it all really depends on your musical reference points and your degree of fondness for the bizarre. (R)

Mutantum "Exp" CDr Verato Project

I had never heard of the Finnish project Mutantum before this CDr, but after doing some investigating I found out that the person behind it was M. Muranen who had previously worked with Dogmeat and Dab.Ay.Ah.; both more familiar names to me. Mutantum presents some drone -based ambient with some occasional, more experimental and psychedelic elements. Usually the tracks are very simple with a strong drone background and some concrete sounds on top, such as the sounds of water or something which could be metal junk. Then there are the occasional sections with a bit more incoherent sounds and human voices etc. Probably created mostly with guitars, the drones are absolutely great. Really long and nicely layered. Then again there are some synth sounds used also and that's what really bothers me since the sounds are extremely cheesy (the choir -type 'oohs' and 'aahs', and strings) and the chord changes are really clumsy. Also, some ambient parts sound a bit too ethereal and 'new age' for my taste whereas tracks like "Flux Influx" really deliver a nice obscure droning ambient approach. A nice new Finnish act which - with a little more effort - could come up with something really interesting. This CDr comes in special transparency sleeve and is limited to 60 copies. (J)

MZ412 "Domine Rex Infernum" CD Cold Meat Industry

This new album for true Swedish black industrialists MZ412 is promoted as not so much representing the current direction of the group, rather being a bridging release (or pr(hell)ude?) to the upcoming album "Infernal Affairs". However, even without such a statement, when listening to this album it is clear that it does not easily slot into the evolution and progress of MZ412 thus far (mainly due to the slower ritualistic overtones of this release). Containing only three tracks, the opener "Invol: Satha" with its searing noise blasts certainly acknowledges the past, but these elements soon drop away to be replaced by a darker brooding aesthetic, complete with a slow keyboard melody akin to what you would hear in an old horror movie. Thus from this perspective, it is the darker ritualistic edge (enhanced by slow tribal drumming and distorted vocal invocations), that comes to represent the predominant aesthetic of "Domine Rex Infernum". With track 1 clocking in at 6 minutes, it is the second track ("Ritual: Summ IIV") at a whopping 41 minutes that further encapsulates this meditative ritualistic aura. Consisting of deep brooding textures, metallic clatter, it is the slow yet incessant tribal drumming that ushers in the suffocating atmosphere of an (imagined) black mass. Pushing through various sections, later parts give rise to ominous keyboard textures, clanging metallic objects and disembodied voices before more turbulent and

urgent hand percussion increases the intensity. Forever forging forward, dense sound loops merge and inter-link to continually progressing the piece, likewise ensuring the composition does not degenerate into repetitive minimalism. In the approach to the 33.3 minute mark things become more outwardly aggressive with searing static blasts and horrific backgrounds textures, highlighting elements used when MZ412 are at their most aggressive. Yet this section is only short lived, receding back to calmer yet bleak territory - final section reverting to tribal drumming and monstrous vocalisations. Third and final track "Komuni: Disciple" is a much shorter piece (and more akin to a traditional MZ412 track), consisting of distorted loops, searing noise, static riddled samples (lifted from "Braveheart" of all movies) and slow rolling percussion (but lasting not more than 7 minutes overall). This album may be a solid listen, however if you haven't heard MZ412's music before I would not recommend being introduced to the group by this particular release, as it works better as a bridging album for established fans. In regard to packaging the simplistic yet stunning black gloss digipack is an admirable visual counterpart to the ritualistic black ambient sounds of this release. (R)

Naevus "Soil" CD S.P.K.R

Naevus are an unusual project in that they flirt with the sound of some established bands such as Death in June, Current 93, the Swans etc, yet do manage to pull off their own aura without sounding simply as copyists. The acoustic guitars, synths, vocals etc overall work well to create mid paced morose atmospheres similar to aforementioned groups, yet the rather rigid and synthetic sounding drum machine programming and plodding bass playing push the tracks towards a gothic rock oriented sound, that unfortunately does grate with me a little (whilst this aspect of goth rock influence is my eyes is detraction, yet to others might not be a problem at all). This album contains ten compositions with the majority treading the standard song structure format, yet a few pieces employ touches of an experimental industrial framework for alternate effect. With this album having been recorded in 2000, a new album "Behaviour" has already been released on Operative Records out of the UK, thus it will be interesting to see what Naevus's new material has to offer given I quite liked their track "Visions, Rushed" (also on the new full length) on the Operative Records compilation CD "First". (R)

Contact: www.spkr.net

Navicon Torture Technologies "Power Romance" CD Cranial Fracture Recordings

I always seem to have a hard time saying anything about NTT. They have some really good violent power electronics elements and some great industrial stuff too, but on the other hand the approach often feels a bit too modern and technology based and at times I feel the aggression and angst to be a bit juvenile. Anyway, "Power Romance" is a re-release of a limited CD released on Annihilus a few years back, the CD version carrying two bonus tracks. Stylistically NTT is not at their noisiest here, presenting more of a hybrid between death industrial and harsh ambient with some power electronics thrown in. The tracks are usually quite simple with layers of distorted loops and electronics giving a background for the vocals which unfortunately often are so sharply distorted that they lack all strength whatsoever. There are occasional samples, but they have been used sparingly. One questionable thing is the inclusion of "The Beautiful Ones" which is a cover version of a track by Prince and the New Power Generation. Won't say more about that one. This may not be the best release from NTT, but it manages to avoid their usual faults so its a nice listen anyway. (J)



Navicon Torture Technologies "I Fucking Hate You All and I Hope You All Fucking Die" CD Blade Records/Eibon Records

I wasn't too convinced of this CD. There are some good moments, like samples of a desperate woman talking, and some loud noise. But in general, what we have here is somehow mechanical/computerized (in a wrong way) sound quality and lame combinations of keyboard tones and crisp, yet powerless noise sounds. I thought the opening track would only be an introduction, as it was musical keyboards with background noise slowly raising to a more and more dominant part. But on the CD there are more of similar atmospheres. For me it's a failure. I could say that I haven't really ever heard a successful mix of keyboard music and noise. There is also standard material of monotone synthesizer sound with samples or vocals on the top, but always done half way. If this would be a demo tape, we could put some hopes for the CD, but as this already is the 2nd CD or so, I wonder what is the history of the band and have they done enough of recordings before rushing into the CD market? Well, at least this originally was a ltd. 20 copies release on his own label, but as I think they DO have better material, I therefore wonder why has this ever been released on CD with a big print run? (M)

Contact: Eibon Records, Via Folli 5, 20134 Milano, Italy. www.eibonrecords.com

Noisebitch / Outermost "This Will Hurt A Bit" CD Anima Mai Nata

Outermost from Japan has been doing noise since '92/93 I think, but it has not been a very high profile noise maker. Small and limited releases on tape, CD and 7" have been scattered around the underground and also one full length CD. This sounds more like Noisebitch than Outermost. Outermost provides most likely the electronic noises, but Noisebitch's concrete noise sounds are on top. Dry and untreated sounds of metal, junk and other things truly hurts a bit. This is not really loud. Most of the time it sounds like Noisebitch is cleaning the garage while playing Outermost on the boom box, but it works! It's not the most usual noise you hear,

and once in a while it's better to listen to this type of sound than a wall of distortion pedal noise. (M)

Noisebitch / Monobrain "Tremor" CDR Anima Mai Nata

This is quite similar to the CDR above. The difference is obviously that Outermost's recognizable sounds are not here, but are replaced with Monobrain's contributions. This is electro-acoustic noise. Not the artsy kind of stuff, but in the underground noise way. Here is more feedback, maybe louder electronics, it's high pitched and often dry/clean sounds of junk/metal. No low bass frequencies or "wall of sound" type of stuff. Like with the Outermost collaboration, each track is different, and it can also change in the middle of the track to new sounds. Sometimes it's too quiet. The thing that I dislike is "electro-acoustic". Volume just turns so low, you don't hear anything, and after a couple of minutes it returns to normal sounds. I don't like too much of silence within noise. (M)

Noiseman433 "The US as I See It" CDR SnipSnip

Noiseman433 sees U.S. as a huge source of noise. At least that's what the CDR offers. 13 cuts in about an hour. CD starts with rather mediocre/standard, or even lame harsh noise, but later shows that there is some potential. Sources seem to be analog synth or other electronics/effects, and many of the tracks sound like the recording could be done without overdubs. There is fast and dynamic changes, but the general sound remains the same. OK release, but doesn't capture much attention when you have a pile of 10 other harsh noise discs which are a bit or a lot better. (M)

Noise Sux "Harsh Pop, Volume One" CDR Legion Sudan

Danish humor noise. I'd say not that far away from for example Violent Onsen Geisha. They have good and harsh moments which are very well made, painful and complex audio torture, but once in a while they end up too far into goofy experimental audio-play. I dislike the drastic volume changes. Silent parts you can hardly hear and noise blasts are in maximum. But I admit this is very well done and should satisfy also those who are looking for just plain noise. (M)

Nothing "Differently *Able" Card CD PACrec

For me an unknown U.S. electronic noise artist. Lots of silence and soft sounds are destroyed with short bursting noise sounds. It's even musical at some points. Obscure keyboard melody or loop of strange sound. In fact, it's less noise than experimental music. Only 3 and a half minutes of material to listen to and c. 1 minute of it is noise. Surprising and actually rather good. (M)

NxFxTEx "No Laughing Matter" CDR Legion Sudan

"Smoke for Peace, smoke for anarchy" says the hand written text in cover sleeve. It's a kind of a "turn off" for me, but could feel interesting for people who like little goofy, experimental noise. This is made with computer, and like Noise Sux reviewed somewhere above, includes drastic volume changes, almost absolute silence and maximum volume noise blast. They use synth simulators like Rebirth and other computer programs listed on the cover. I guess these are very cheap, so the price should not be the issue not to try these, but if you get a headache from sound collages created from drum beats, music fragments and noise, I can tell there is also such type of stuff. (M)

Odio Vita Demo CDR

This basically has nothing to do with Degenerate. It's really crappy U.S. EBM which is basically well done, but on the other hand in no way differs from the other 5 billion shitty EBM acts which fail to bring anything of their own to the genre. Simply boring and shite. (J)

Contact: carrierflux@hotmail.com



Of the Wand and Moon "emptiness:emptiness:emptiness:" CD Euphonious Records

With strict adherence to the framework of the neo-folk scene, Kim Larsen of the group Of the Wand and Moon has produced his second album under the depressive title "emptiness:emptiness:emptiness:". While I am yet to hear the first full length "Nighttime Nightrhythms", I must say I was sufficiently taken by the 7" EP on Hau Rock to be rather keen to check out this new album. This was likewise in spite of hearing some complaints & criticisms that the project has lost some of its individuality due to the perception that this album slavishly sounds like Death in June during the "What Ends When the Symbols Shatter?" and "Rose Clouds of Holocaust" album era. Yet side stepping this debate, when you listen to the opening misanthropic cut of "Lost in Emptiness" with its mid paced acoustic guitar driven ode (complete with haunting background synth textures, oboe and mildly sung vocals), it is without doubt a grand vision indeed. The following piece "My Devotion will Never Fade" is a touch more militant but subdued yet incessant rolling drums (that follow the guitar strumming), - the organ tune left to float and circle above. Steeped in mysticism, "In a Robe of Fire" consists only of vocals accompanying by cello and violin, finally completed with the sound of crackling fire in the background. "Algir Naudir Wunjo", a soundscape built on a distant orchestral melody and percussion/vocal mantra, while evocative, perhaps drags on a little at over 12 minutes in length. "Gal Anda" increases the tempo of the acoustic guitar strumming (again percussion, organ textures and understated vocals are used), with the atmosphere flitting between a morose and celebratory that really takes flight with the inclusion of a flute solo late track. Final

two album tracks revert to the drawn out soundscape style of the group (working generally with sparse percussion, synth textures, vocals etc), which although are interesting and hypnotic, for me pale in comparison to the acoustic side of the group. In passing I would not say that this is a perfect album, nor an instant classic, but this still certainly showcases that Of the Wand and Moon are one of the strongest acts in the current crop of neo-folk acts. Lastly I will highlight that the artwork is the perfect accompaniment of the pagan and misanthropic themes of the album's lyrics. Runes, fire and misery indeed... (R)

Contact: www.vow.no/euphonious

Ohka "Power Cannot Conquer Heaven" CDR Human Host

Two long tracks, "Substitute for Philosophy" and "The Instant of Chemical Recognition" of fierce and moody feedback drenched noise. Reminds me of older late 80s, early 90s American noise. Nothing ground breaking but just good, solid, raw dirty noise - the way it should be. Recorded live with no over dubs, Ohka keeps the sound flowing while still maintaining tension by continually pushing and pulling the sound. While being primarily feedback based other junk sounds, turntables, radio, tapes etc are used which adds to the broken analog flavor of this disc. Hard edgy noise that maintains a sense of depth and space while presenting wave after wave of aggression. For fans of Richard Ramirez, old Controlled Bleeding, old Macronympha, and Streicher. Bravo boys! My only complaint is why isn't this on cassette? A C60 would be perfect and add to the old feeling. Black and white xerox covers with abstract and (violent images?), limited to 93 copies. (DF)

Contact: tusksofblood@hotmail.com



Olhon "Veiovis" CD Nautilus

Olhon being a collaborative project between Italian projects Bad Sector and Where, it sees the artists tackling the water oriented theme embodied in the releases issued on Spectre's side label Nautilus. With both artists working within the general field of dark ambience, luckily this collaboration sees neither overly dominating proceedings, thus creating a CD that embodies a positive blend of influence. It is further noted that the atmospheres of this release have been derived from source material recorded in the depths of various volcanic lakes, with the pieces being further manipulated into compositions via a studio process. Thus from this perspective the album's overall sound arrives as being partly organic (source recordings) and partly digital (additional studio sounds and manipulations). Containing seven untitled tracks, the first piece contains a bristling yet subterranean timbre, and is a fine example of where the subtle influence of the two artists can be detected merging to create another level of sound altogether (Where with suffocating dark ambience and Bad Sector with brooding experimental manipulations). At times verging on aggressive the second piece is multi-textural, with wave upon wave of sound surging from the speakers, interspersed with sporadic digital sonar frequencies. With a glacial ebb and flow, the brittle drone oriented harmonics of track three are almost cosmic, yet the guttural frequencies keeping the vibe deeply submerged, and while less aquatic than other tracks, the fifth piece is nonetheless a fantastic piece of dark ambience, with a phenomenal breadth of sound (through headphones my ears feel VERY far apart!). The sixth piece transporting the listener on a journey, one can imagine sinking into the murky fathoms, with the sounds clearly evoking the feeling of the crushing pressure and bringing visions of the light gradually giving way to inky blackness as the depth increases (yes, this is certainly emotive music). Seventh and final track is another highlight embodied within a track of depressive dark ambience (droning textures, shimmering textures and subtle harmonics and rhythms intertwine and overlap, with the pace never rising beyond a crawl). This album is another fine example of a collaborative project that showcases a diverse sound palate between tracks, however when Bad Sector's name is involved you are always assured a fine production (not to denigrate Where's contributions of course!). (R)

Orphx "The Living Tissue" CD Hands

Having not paid any attention to Orphx since their debut CD on Malignant Records (way back in 1995), the magnitude of this stupidity was rather soberly driven home when I witnessed the brilliance of this project first hand when they performed live as the closing act for the Maschinenfest 2001. While these days they may encompass a much subtler sound than their formative material, their current focus on rhythmic and experimental minimalism is utterly engaging and hypnotic. The tracks on this CD actually form a concept, with field recordings being taken from various sources and the ensuing compositions are specific attempts to capture the vibe and atmosphere of the source material of each track. Thus the merging of organic spheres of sound (the sound source material), with the clinical (the studio construction technique of deriving quirky rhythms from the recorded sounds), shows the high skill and musical foresight of this duo. Favourites of this disc include the somatic rhythmic pulses of "Biorhythm", surging forward at mid pace, overlapping clicks, pops and swelling sound textures, whilst "Mother Tongue" built on crowd samples with a dark droning undercurrent, uses snappy clicking elements and hand clapping to create its blended atmosphere. Not being based on a rhythmic style, "Ether" arrives in a suffocating cyclic fashion by enveloping the listener with the dense rising/falling textures, additionally with it appearing that the sound source is derived from wind recordings. "Accelerator" on the other hand is fantastic late night highway driving music (you can just envisage the shadowed landscape effortlessly slipping by), with the indicator sounds amongst other car sound samples being cleverly used to create the up tempo rhythmic elements. "Naked City" works more as a glimpse of the

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Iron Justice
"Post"
Double 7" Gatefold
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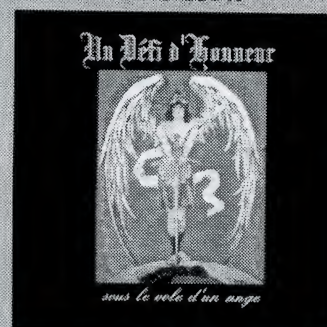
Absolutely the best recordings to date
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Dead Man's Hill
"Ruin / the Ruin"
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Solo Project by Clophill Member
Marching/Neo-classical Music.

A Challenge of Honour
"sous le vole d'un ange"
Double 7" Gatefold
LSDO-2S040



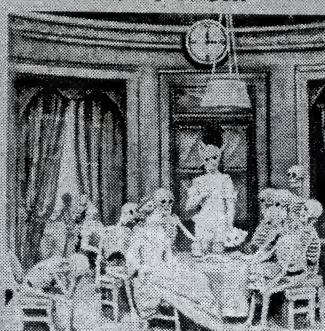
Martial/Folk Industrial Music
with DIJ/Toroidh Influence.

Clophill
"Salve Vio"
CD + 7"
LSDO-C08 : LSDO-S010



Gothic/Neo-classical/Bombastic/
Martial Industrial like ISN/Aghast.

Sonne Hagal
"Tarja / Aud"
7" Picture Disc
LSDO-P/S011



2 Sorrow Tracks with
Dark Elizium Feel.

Jarl
"Woundprofile"
CD + 7"
LSDO-C020 : LSDO-S021



Solo Project by IRM: Member
Brilliant Dark Ambient Soundscape.

Arditi
"Vincere"
Acetate 10" + 7" Box
LSDO-A/M036 : LSDO-S037



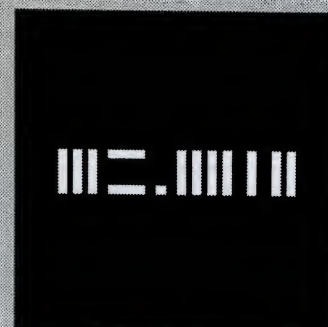
Sideproject by Puissance
in the vein of
early Der Blutharsch / Toroidh.

The Final Resistance
"by Rasthof Dachau / Stahlwerk 9"
Acetate 10" + 7" Box
LSDO-A/M038 : LSDO-S039



TFR - Collaboration of
Rasthof Dachau / Stahlwerk 9
Ultimate Dark Industrial.

MZ. 412 vs Folkstorm
"Live Ritual"
Acetate 10" + 7" Box
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city it was recorded in (Hamilton, Ontario), sounding mostly akin to field recordings being taken whilst an individual walks along the busy streets, past shops, continuing into interior spaces such as a shopping mall. However that said, the end result is much more evocative than the description would suggest (likewise the same can be said of the track "Dwelling" built on everyday home based recorded sounds). Lastly, the title track is the final of the album encompassing of subtle collage of environmental recordings and nature oriented sounds inter-linked to create loose droning textures. Overall containing an excellent blend of experimentalism with skilful minimalist composition, this is a CD that could be said to easily bridge the gap between the experimentalist art scene and the works of rhythmic ambient artists. Great stuff indeed. (R)

Orplid "Geheiligte fei der Toten Name" mCD

Eis & Licht

Originally released a few years back in a plain card slipcase, this mCD has now been reissued in a digipack format. Here the title track is the first off the mark, being a slow rolling marching hymn which uses stern and commanding male vocals, alongside with a tense orchestral backing rising in flair and prominence at the track progresses. "Jugend" is however entirely different, being a short bitter sweet piece of duelling acoustic guitars that acts as an interlude to the orchestral cinematic track "Der Sonne Soldner". Built with layers of war samples, sweeping noise, ominous classical passages and whispered vocals, it is mildly reminiscent of LJDLP's musical approach given the distant forlorn atmosphere evoked. "Im Sturm" on the other hand is an acoustic call to arms, using an urgent acoustic tune and full throated commanding vocals that are undercut with pounding militant percussion (mid section the mood is slightly calmed with a piano melody). Fifth and final track "Belgrad" is a slow orchestral piece constructed with slow moving string and horn sections, likewise with a sampled voice referencing Hitler's bombing of the aforementioned city. Given that this mCD showcases both sides and sounds of Orplid (the militant neo-orchestral side along with their neo-folk acoustic tracks), it highlights exactly why this new group have gained such critical acclaim within the said genres. (R)

Contact: www.eislicht.de

Ovum "Avsky" Card CDR PACrec

Harsh noise with a VERY strong rumbling bass end and feedback/vocal noise on top. Great for 4 minutes, but wouldn't keep my interest for a full length CD if there weren't any drastic changes. This is actually "darker" than just sheer violent noise, because of the heavy low end and static style. The vocals are not loud. They are like whispers through distortion. The disc gets slightly louder before it ends. (M)

Paraffin Affiliates "Demo 2002" CDr

9 tracks of improvised free music/noise. With a clarinet, electric and acoustic guitars, bass, drums and accordion. 3 members and 3 guest performers. I liked their official CDr release in the past and this is not bad either. A rather good sound, probably done at their rehearsal place. Some instruments are thin sounding, but that's fine. Is there more than improvisation? I guess not. I listen to this type of stuff very rarely, but there's nothing here why I should say this is bad. Paraffin Affiliates managed to capture an interesting atmosphere of free-jazz-noise whatever and I could listen over an hour of this without any intention of pushing the stop button. I would personally like more of strength and noise to individual instruments. Not keep it as dry. For example some echo to the drums, the bass could be brutally bulldozing sound etc. Well, of course it would change the whole identity of the band, but I'll wait and see what they do next. The guitar player of Paraffin Affiliates also has his solo project Gelsomina, which I'd recommend to check out. (M)

Contact: Pekka PT, Puistokatu 3 D 69, 20100 Turku, Finland. pekper@utu.fi

Pedestrian Deposit "Anatomy Scum-Drum" 3"CDr Monorail Trespassing

Brutal and creative little disc, and the first release from PD in almost two years! This project is very slow with output, but always high quality including his c08 debut cassette "Median" and a few compilation tracks. This is the best noise I have heard since TEF's "Saturn Ring Plane Hazard" CDr on Xerxes two years ago. Using a variety of techniques mostly consisting of well placed and densely layered field recording mixed with sophisticated electronic processing, filtering and looping augmented by violent and aggressive feedback drenched distortion hits. The deep urban atmospheres contrasted with up front in your face high pitched tearing noise assaults shows a level of sophistication and intention severely lacking in most harsh noise of today. Previously PD seemed to be dealing with a very gray and detached urban indifference and it's a nice surprise to see them focusing in on fetishistic content which brings a more personal dimension to the noise. The third track has added sounds by Viodre (another promising new USA noise band) which adds a nice bit of hard spice to the disc. Beautiful silver and transparent cover showcasing brunette femme fatale sexual fetish/obsession with old school yet refined looks to the package. A very challenging and tasteful little lap dance. Limited to 50 copies but worth hunting down if you can find a copy. For those of you that crave well made hifi noise with personal touch. (DF)

Contact: Terminus01@msn.com

Peripheral Pulse "The Loss of Consciousness" Card CDr PACrec

New U.S. harsh noise artists. Two tracks in almost 6 minutes. It's close to the sound of Thirdborn. Not that much of low end and everything happens fast, but still it's not so drastically jumping sound. Fast changes and details always stay in a certain frame and there aren't any surprises. Decent noise. (M)

Petit Mal "Flowers" Card CDr PACrec

French female vocal cut ups/reel-to-reel manipulations. That's basically what it is. There are some sounds in the back, but they are minor details. Again, being a 5 minute CDr makes this very good, but I'm quite sure I would not listen to a full length of similar kind of material. (M)

P. Miles Bryson "From Some Bygone Heroic Age" CDr

P. Miles Bryson is an American sound artist whose previous works have been released on such labels as Solipsism (Self Abuse Records' sub-label) and SSSM. "From Some Bygone Heroic Age" is a sort of a demo release, although I must say that I've never come across such a professional demo, or even a CDr release. The disc comes in a normal jewel case with a really thick 40 page (!) full colour booklet with all sorts of artwork etc. The music is a combination of experimental, electroacoustic ambient sounds and samples (or more likely stolen parts) from classical and traditional music. Instead of the common 'neo-classical' style of sampling and looping short parts of classical music etc., P. Miles Bryson takes long pieces of music and fits them in his own material, often without processing them in any way. This definitely the thing that bothers me the most about this disc. Simply taking material from other records and putting them on your own without really manipulating them in any way doesn't really seem like an interesting thing. On the other hand, the parts which are Bryson's own work, i.e. the more experimental material sounds very interesting, and I would have been happy had the entire disc consisted of those almost soundscape, minimal ambient sounds. Now the whole thing sounds basically pretentious and a failed attempt to create something too artistic. (J)

Contact: P. Miles Bryson, 641 N. Vineyard, Mesa, AZ 85201, USA. drsquiddy@earthlink.net



Pop Culture Rape Victim "Public Display of Affection" CDr Harshnoise.com

American harsh noise in the "traditional" 90s way. Chains of distortion pedals and effects - which you also see in the photo in the CD cover. The result is dynamic and varied harsh noise, yet very typical as we can imagine from effect-box based noise. I assume it's a (studio-) live recording. It's simple enough, not over-done with too much layers, but still with plenty of things happening. There are 7 songs and I think there could be a slight change of pedals between them, even if the basic form of noise remains the same. I don't hear any computer editing nor that the sound would be cleaned too much in mastering. A good CD for total noise heads. This is a CDr, but very professional just like K2's "Flake Nitro" reviewed before. Harshnoise.com seems to be coming a center of harsh noise releases with their extensive plans to release more CDr's with Knurl, Liith's Son, Flatline Construct, Circuit Wound, Facialmess, Sewer Election, Noiseman433, DCLXVI, Viodre, T.E.F., SICKNESS, etc. Some people might wonder why a CDr is 10\$ (ppd in USA), but I can tell there is very little difference between this and a real CD. The CD has professional covers and printed labels just like a real CD. You see it's a CDr only by looking at the disc which is slightly green. (M)

Praying for Oblivion / Lava Split CD Radon Studio Records

I have no recollection of how this got into my hands. If it was a promo or something. For a long time it's been waiting to be listened and it turned out to be much better than expected. "A Lesson in Obedience (Martyrdom Suits You)" from Praying for Oblivion is harsh industrial noise from United States, bringing you dirty sound, some distorted vocals and lo-fi noise. "Space is the Place" by Lava is even more industrial. This Italian project formed by A034 and Bruno Dorella (OvO, Ronin, Daniele Brusaschetto and other experimental projects on Bar La Muerte Records), delivers metal percussion beats, filthy noise sounds and only in the middle part of the track it begins to have computer-like sounds and dull effects. But in general it is dirty industrial sounds, adjusted and built into rhythmic form. After a dozen minutes the track transforms the same music into spacey ambient techno and finally into strange experimental music sounding like a combination of experimental industrial and greek folk. Total length of the track is c. 20 minutes and it leaves you amazed and surprised. (M)

Contact: www.radonstudio.com

Propergol "Tormentor" 7"

Nuit & Brouillard

On this 7", Propergol is heading into a different direction than what could be expected from his last two CDs. The two tracks presented here are mostly just dynamic layers of electronics abuse without the overt use of samples and minimal details; here Propergol goes straight into the point and in my opinion it works just great. The first track, "Tormentor" is based on a rhythmic loop of electronics over which layers and layers of noisy sounds start piling up, ending up as a storm of sounds. A lot of the noises sound like metal junk with massive amounts of echo and delay. A very strong track. The second track, "I Need You" also has some loop foundation, but is a lot more noisy and harsh in every way. Heavy electronics pulsations and higher frequency screeches flushing in and out, eventually building up into a massive wall of noisy electronics. This track also features some distorted and delayed vocals, but mostly they're buried so deep in the mix that they just add to the galore of noises. All in all, this is a pretty nice release from Propergol, definitely emphasising that he's able to do some really heavy and intense stuff as well. (J)

Contact: Nuit & Brouillard, BP 212, 59029 Lille Cedex, France. www.nuitetbrouillard.net



Puissance "Genocidal" 7" L.S.D. Organisation

Why limited to 300 copies only when the albums sell thousands? I guess this will become soon a sought after rarity. Even for myself, who dislikes most Puissance works (and actually don't own anything besides this anymore), this was quite a positive surprise. The title track on the A-side presents a dark ambient track. Simple and good. Nothing new in the scene, but still darker and more genocidal atmosphere than keyboard neo-classical. On the other side we have quite a typical Puissance track with computer/synthesizer/keyboard created orchestral music. Silent large drums rumbling in the back, horns and huge organs, violins etc. I can hear that they have very expensive equipment and very good talent to use them. The result is "dramatic", I could say, but still for me this sounds like a movie soundtrack, not something I'd listen as itself too often. A couple of post cards, 7" size insert and a color cover and vinyl. Another collector's wet dream. (M)

Pur Désir "Pièce Premier" 3"CDr

I have no info whatsoever on this act/artist, but since the disc was sent to me by the same person whose CDr under the name Celestial Plenitude I reviewed in Degenerate #2, I assume this is another project from the same person. Whereas Celestial Plenitude was pretty noisy stuff, Pur Désir is more droning, dark ambient and thus definitely much more to my liking. The material seems to be combining some minimal layers of synth drones together with recordings of metal junk etc. The approach is quite lo-fi and somehow primitive, and because of this it probably sounds a lot more interesting than if it had just been another hi-tech synth project. Here the atmosphere is created with simple drones, loops and almost untreated metal junk recordings, still managing to sound really powerful and intriguing. On a more critical note, I must say that I find it a bit odd for a Spanish artist to be using only French titles for the tracks as well as the project itself, but on the other hand that really doesn't affect how good the actual material sounds. Surely there are things and ideas to develop a little further, but for this sort of a small 3"CDr release (with a nice full colour, textured paper sleeve) Pur Désir offered surprisingly good material. (J)

Contact: celestialplenitude@hotmail.com



Pure "Noonbugs" CD Mego

I tend to get this bad feeling whenever I get a Mego release in my hands and more than often the feeling proves to be correct, i.e. I don't like the record. This time - I'm happy to say - the feeling was proven wrong. "Noonbugs" is Pure's debut full length and it could quite easily be categorised simply as dark ambient, but that would leave out a lot of the elements featured on this disc. Most of the tracks are based on layers of rather sharp electronic drones and loops, but the things that happen on the surface make this release a bit different from your average droning ambient record. There are elements taken from glitch, minimalist and experimental material, but for once they have been used in a way which accompanies the other elements instead of clipping them apart and making just a big mess of everything. There are parts where the weird clicks, pops and other such things appear a bit too upfront thus sounding fairly annoying, but that's just some little bits here and there. This CD is one of the very few Mego releases that I've really liked and would recommend it to anyone enjoying a bit more experimental and difficult blend of dark ambient. (J)

R|A|N "The Nacrastr" CD Malignant Antibody

With the label promotional blurb for this album reading: "imagine Lustmord & Raison D'être marooned on an ancient alien planet", it simultaneously sets expectations high, whilst stealing my thunder as I simply cannot devise a better description! Not to disappoint at all, this album easily lives up to this expectation and to add further praise, comparisons could be made to Inade, particularly with respect of their "Alderbaran" CD. Notwithstanding that R|A|N wears its influences rather boldly, "the nacrastr" has been created with conviction and skill that it transcends any simplistic accusation of being a mere copyist project. Likewise the absolutely gorgeous and detailed cover artwork (solar images, baron extraterrestrial landscapes, gold foil stamped writing and spot varnishing), is a perfect visual counterpart to the album.

Composed in nine parts, each inter-links with the next to create a complete and quite complex whole. Utilising a large array sound elements and a multi-layering technique, the aura is one of a forever moving and evolving album. Constructed partially through synthetic means, the depth and complexity is really achieved through the use of sampling, environmental recordings and real instrumentation (gongs, hand percussion etc), that have all been manipulated within the overall framework of deep drones, harmonic loops and muted melodies. It is also interesting to note that the sound palate radiates a certain warmth that is not normally associated with dark ambience, likewise managing to infuse atmospheres that on one hand are quite alien, yet that also hint at an benevolent spirituality.

I must say that after having heard as many dark ambient albums as I have over the years, it takes something special to really grab me, yet this album contains that indescribable 'something'. A

immensely strong debut that should guarantee a legion of fans awaiting future sound works. (R)

Rabbitspeech CDR Absurd

This appears to be a documentation of Rabbitspeech's two live shows made for a theatre performance in 2002. I've no idea whether this act has done anything prior to them or ever since. The sound is really minimalist, based on live electronics, turntables, objects and an amplified toy typewriter. Often it's just random crackles and bleeps here and there or static sine and occasional feedback. Pretty much the kind of stuff I have no interest in, as it didn't manage to catch my interest enough that I would consider it challenging by any means. I guess it's a good thing this wasn't done on a laptop, because that would have made this entirely worthless. (J)

Contact: www.anet.gr/absurd

Regard Extreme "Resurgence" CD Cynfeidd

Probably most well known for a collaboration with LJDLP a few years back, however fellow French neo classical project Regard Extreme do have two solo albums to their name. Here with their third album, it is actually a partial revision of early tracks, as referenced by the notation on the cover "re-orchestrated, re-recorded & unreleased tracks". Thus accordingly "Resurgence" includes the title track (being formerly unreleased), 2 original versions and 7 new versions of old pieces. So in all with the nine tracks we have lush, swelling neo classical orchestrations as the main musical element. Sticking to a slow pace, morose strings and choir like textures are underscored with deep brass melody, occasional using martial tympani/snare percussion to add air of urgency to the otherwise slow movement of the album. Whilst all of the tracks have been synthetically derived, the album has been suitably produced so as not to degenerate into totally cheesy keyboard sounding neo-classical. Given Regard Extreme's compositions have a certain formula and sound signature it means that there is not an great degree of diversity between pieces, however "Egotisme" is an exception to this rule, given it is a rather heavy militaristic/orchestral track reminiscent of early In Slaughter Natives. Nonetheless if solemn neo-classical catches your ear it is done with ample flair here. Full color slimline digipack with insert is the packaging for this release. (R)

Contact: www.cynfeidd.free.fr

Richard Ramirez "Tricoficia" 3"CDr Tabula Rasa

Richard Ramirez starts off Tabula Rasa's Dermatology Series; a series of 3" CDr releases focusing on specific dermatological diseases. The first track "Honor Your Disease" opens with a long section of really muddy harsh ambient - style low frequency rumble. After a while it gets noisier and more varied with harsh noise elements and vocals (processed through a vocoder - like effect which to me sounded a bit stupid). The track continues being noisy, but is often surprisingly thin for being Richard Ramirez stuff and somehow sounds a bit uninspired. The second track "Post-Symptom" is just a short track of low end harsh ambient rumble very much similar to the beginning of the first track. Despite a few good parts in the harsh ambient and harsh noise sections this proved out to be a slight disappointment. Limited edition of 100 copies. (J)



Richard Ramirez "Certain Cruelty" CDr Slaughter Productions

Violent images inside a blue jewelbox show that this is an old Ramirez work. It dates back to '95 and is previously released as cassette, remastered in 2001 and put out in easy CDr format. One hour of harsh noise keeps inside 2 live sets and one studio recording. Each are equally intense, primitive lo-fi harsh noise. Typical for Ramirez' works for that era. Loud mid/low end noise without overbuds, most likely recorded on a cassette deck. I don't have the original tape, but I'd assume the sound was not cleaned too much while being mastered for CDr. (M)

Robert Rich "Bestiary" CD Release Entertainment

Although not a total aficionado of Robert Rich's solo works, the first thing that jumps to my mind when thinking of his sound is flowing dark ambience. This new effort of his is then a touch on the surprising side given that it encompasses a bizarre textural rhythmic style on a deft hallucinogenic tangent. So this CD may not be specifically dark, yet the sounds are clearly not on a 'happy' tangent either, nonetheless having been composed in a playful manner. Constructed to contain a synthetic and organic fused edge, throbbing sounds, both of murky and atmospheric textures converge into a complex mass of sound, often with fleeting tribal and eastern elements appearing via the use of odd percussion and disembodied voices to generate a warm sonic miasma. Never content to follow a clear defined path, the compositions are as sporadic and unpredictable as a shifting deep-sea tide, flowing continually into new territory, one track inter-linking with the next, traversing the densely composed and stripped back minimalism. Given this music is not all doom and gloom this just maybe could appeal to wider audience (ie: world music listeners), without alienating those who despise 'new age' type music twaddle. (R)

Contact: www.releaseentertainment.com

Rotten Piece "Plays the Beatles" CDr Lazy Squid

Houston's finest noise couple returns with a new slant on their sound. Taking the world's most overrated band and running it through the Rotten Piece sound labs comes up with a great album.

While this isn't "noise" in the Hijokaiden sense it is definitely a worthy release. Very similar to the cut and paste "audio collage" of early Merzbow. Any release by this band is worth getting. (A)

Scivas "...and You Will Fear Death Not" CD Eis & Licht

Being aware of the group's name but not having heard their music, I did however know that they were of the neo-folk genre and that this album was quite an anticipated one. Strangely enough this album is somewhat removed from what I would have expected from a neo folk album both thematically and musically. With inspiration centring on a traditionalist view of empirical Japan, a hymn/choir like vocal piece provides the setting, while the following track "Age of the Last Law - Nuclear Japan" is a track composed with rough and distorted electric guitar strumming, backing with synth layers and spoken vocals. Interesting but certainly unexpected. With short cello/spoken work interlude ("The World is a Teardrop..."), the mood is entirely altered again, leading into a quieter passage of the album spanning "Breathing Deeply" (morose violin melodies) and "The Peach Boy" (haunting acoustic guitar, flute, cello and female vocal driven tune that draws inspiration from a traditional Japanese tale - and one I dearly loved hearing as a child). "A Tower of the Devil" dramatically shifts the album's focus once again, here consisting of a melange of programmed rhythmic elements, choir voices, spoken vocals and synthesiser textures. Again certainly different from expectation and potentially comparable to the often odd sound of Allerseelen. "Passion" alternately meanders along as a slow acoustic folk tune of plucked/strummed guitars only to morph into a slow march with the late inclusion of rolling snare percussion. However "Die Before Dying" is easily the strongest track of the album, being a fantastic yet morose militant piece that ebbs and flows over its 10 minute expanse. With the mid paced acoustic guitar strumming being accentuated with fleeting horns, commanding piano lines, martial percussion and spoken vocals it creates an air of both celebration and sorrow. Powerful to say the least. Following, "The Empire in Me" is another standout being built with slow violin, sullen horns, church bells, bass and (now trademark) spoken vocals. Later the entire track builds with belligerent anger with the use of rolling percussion and muted electric guitar strumming to create another highlight. Concluding on an almost uplifting note, "In Memory of the Last Empire" uses trumpeting horns, rolling piano tune and slow violins to convey an aura of celebration intermixed with a hint of sadness (possibly directed towards an era that passed into the pages of history?). Nonetheless a fine ending indeed. "...and You Will Fear Death Not" is an album that may contain contradictory sounds when considering the standard approach of the neo-folk scene, however these have been meshed together with Scivas's inspiration, ideal and conviction to create an altogether intense listen. (R)

Screening CDr

I reviewed Screening's demo CDr in Degenerate #2 and what we have here is a full length work including both new material as well as some tracks off the aforementioned demo which I didn't enjoy that much. Screening uses only a bass guitar as a sound source and even though a lot of good things could be done using such limited sources, I still think Screening too often falls into merely toying around with some effects and lacks a clear direction. I'm happy to hear more droning ambient - style material on this disc compared to the earlier, but still I feel somehow disenchanted by this. Maybe the addition of more layers and steadier dynamics would help to let the listener actually get a grip of the tracks. Now it just enters and leaves your ears without leaving an impression. (J)

Contact: iwr@ureach.com

Sea-Green Series Chapter I 3"CDr Gazoline

This new series comes as a spin-off of Hermetique, the French label run by J. Nougailon of Propergol. I'm not exactly sure about the concept behind the series, but this is a nice release; a 3"CDr coming in a small black envelope with full colour decorations and inserts. The three tracks on this disc move somewhere between dark ambient and industrial, often with quite a unique feel somehow reminding me of a film. There isn't much structure in the tracks as they rather float onwards with rising and falling tension, going from minimal field recordings to layered soundscapes filled with sweeping drones, voices, samples, metallic noises etc. I must admit I'm a bit puzzled by this whole series, but still I enjoyed the actual material very much. This release is limited to 99 copies, so I'd advice all interested parties to act fast. (J)

Contact: Hermetique, BP 68, 59009 Lille Cedex, France. www.hermetique.net



Sektion B "No Tomorrow" Card CDr L.White Records

2 1/2 minute low power electronics track from these German guys. Dealing with black supremacist's hatred against the whites. The song itself is rhythmic power electronics with distorted voice and some analog synth, but it being so short and not the best of Sektion B's material, the cover captures most of the attention. Very nice full color covers with quotes from Malcolm X, Rev. James Cone and Eldridge Clever (Black Panther leader). Limited to 100. Not much to listen to, but a nice item anyway. (M)

Sewer Election / Clew of Theseus Split CDr Cathartic Process

Nice looking design; CDr with on-body label artwork, blue jewelcase and full color covers inside. Sewer Election continue on what they do best: harsh noise! Grinding loops, ultra noisy whirlwind chaos. Sharp, well designed/composed fragments put together with good taste. Good alternative when wondering if you'd want good noise. Clew Of Theseus is the label boss of Cathartic Process and he doesn't lose to S.E. at all. In fact, if somebody would have sent me

this CDr and not said it's a split, I could have assumed all tracks were by the same artist. They are not similar, but this is harsh noise with basically the same type of general sound. The difference is that Clew of Theseus includes more of the original sound source, and not so purely distorted material. There is plenty of great clanging sound of metal scrap, painful feedback and head crushing electronics. Little over 20 minutes of playing time have made it also possible to listen to this a few times even when there's the deadline coming soon and still lots of records to listen & review... Great! (M)

Contact: www.catharticprocess.com

Sewer Election "I Guess Peace of Mind is Illusion After All" 3"CDr

Sewer Records

Swedish harsh noise from September 2002 and it blasts better than most Swedish noisers I've heard. Sewer Election is very much of "new school" Japanese way. Pain Jerk, Kazumoto Endo, mid 90's Merzbow, etc etc. Very well done, complex and dynamic sound. Harsh grinding noise loops, high pitched electronics, exploding bass end. It has basically everything you'd expect from typical - yet enjoyable harsh noise of this style. Limited to 50 copies. (M)

Sewer Election "Ljunganar Blues" 3"CDr Chondritic Sound

If the 15 minute playing time of the "I Guess Peace of Mind is Illusion After All" 3"CDr left you asking for more, here it is. Another short (yet nearly full disc with the capacity of 21 min.) blast of harsh noise in the same format, now on a label from the U.S. Hard to compare what are the exact differences between this and the earlier. The disc is divided to 4 tracks, style is the same, but the noise naturally goes in different ways. The beginning of the disc is very heavy sounding, totally crushing noise. They have a wide variety of sources and details going on. It's pure pleasure to hear such well done work. I would say Sewer Election is nearly reaching the atmosphere of Merzbow's "Artificial Inavagation" 3"CD which to me is the best record of this style of noise. One of the best newcomers in harsh noise, but unfortunately all the releases so far are limited between 20-50 copies. This one also limited to 44 copies. (M)

Shiflet "Afternoon Thoughts" CDr SnipSnip

I was not positively surprised when I noticed that 2 out of 3 tracks were played with a lap-top + computer set up. But actually those tracks turned out to be the best ones. The 1st one is a lengthy track recorded with reverb tanks and effects. Lo-fi noise. Two of the other tracks are live recordings, as said, done with a lap-top and guitar. Even with the involvement of computer, the sound remains dirty and quite lo-fi. Maybe we can also thank the live recording for that. Guitar provides feedback and droning noise and the lap-top does quite close to what you could achieve with an analog synth. So the result is pleasing. The 2nd track has more dominant lap-top, the 3rd track must be the best. The sound has small changing and evolving details, but in general you could say it's rather monotonous and nearly trance inducing. You can't say that the audience reactions would be wild, but I would have probably liked to hear this with live volume. (M)

Sjerp "Demo 2" CDr

Here's a new artist from Czech Republic doing what he calls "dark atmospherical psychodelical ambient". Well, to me it sounds more like pretty basic and often cheesy dark synth music done with some boring preset sounds. Then again I could probably say the same about most of the stuff in this genre which gets released through big labels etc. Anyway, Sjerp does a mixture of melody-based dark synth music and more ambient based material with slowly sweeping sounds. The latter obviously works better much due to the very cheap synth sounds and that definitely is a weakness here since most of the tracks could actually sound interesting had they been done with proper equipment. Also, there is much diversity between the quality of the tracks, i.e. there are a few which actually sound good (such as the industrial influenced "The Dark Nest") and on the other hand there are tracks which just sound simply stupid. I'm probably not the best person to review this kind of stuff, so I'll leave it here. (J)

Contact: sjerp@email.cz



Skalpelli "In Between" CD Deafborn Records

After a couple of tapes and compilation appearances, this Swiss project offer their debut full length. Their track on the Deafness is Not a Gift compilation was good, but nothing special, so I wasn't too sure what to expect from this CD. The first track opens with some harsh noise which I believe is mostly done with synth, so the sound is not too abrasive or dirty, but it's still pretty noisy. Some weird sounding vocals appear here and there, but luckily not too often, since they didn't sound so good. The good thing with Skalpelli is, that in addition to the rather compressed synth sounds, they also use some real metal junk sounds as well as some other object noises and feedback, adding a lot of power to the material. The second track "Stomach Cancer" is probably my favourite off this album, reminding me of some good German style power electronics/industrial. On the fourth track "Wasserleiche", Skalpelli jump into some rhythmical power noise beats, and although it sounds better than most of those Ant-Zen artists, it's still something I could've done without. The rest of the CD continues along less rhythmical lines, moving somewhere between harsh ambient and industrial with a bit of experimental electronica here and there, but nothing that gets too tedious, though. Surprisingly good stuff from Skalpelli already on their debut, so at least I'll be keeping an eye on them in the future as well. (J)

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- LW 001 CDR SEKTION B Power Is Nothing Without Control lim. 100 (sold out)
LW 002 CD DAWN PROJEKT Grey September lim. 500
LW 003 CDR SEKTION B Live Action Nr. 4 / 20.10.2001 lim. 50 (sold out)
LW 004 3CD V.A. Don't Hunt, What You Can't Kill with Thorofon, ExOrder, Anenzephalia, DJK, Phosgen, Virologic, Sektion B, Anon Plus, Azoikum, Strom.ec, Axon Neuron/Vagwa, Government Alpha, Streicher, Blank Banner, Irikarah, Napalmed, Dødsdømd, Alienlovers in Amagasaki, SRP, Today I'm Dead, Skin Crime, Lefthandeddecision, PTT, Dresden 45, Human Destructur, Sektor, Drape Excrement, Wutanes Heer, Atrax Morgue, Murderous Vision, Propergol, Rasthof Dachau, Krieger, Industriepalast&SK, Taint, Grunt, C.O.Caspar, Sickness, Survival Unit and The Grey Wolves lim. 500
LW 005 CDR AZOIKUM Menschenhass II: Retroactive Birth Control lim. 200
LW 006 CDR SEKTION B No Tomorrow (business-card) lim. 100 (sold out)
LW 007 CDR Split RAGNAR / LIQUIDATED ERROR lim. 200
LW 008 CDR BLACK LIGHT ORCHESTRA Great American Death Machine lim. 200
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LW 010 CDR PSYCHOLOGISCHE ABWEHRFRONT Global Mind Control lim. 200
LW 011 CDR HEIMCOMPUTER 80 Unsere moderne Welt lim. 200
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- LW V01 Video VHS PAL DAWN PROJEKT Grey September lim. 75
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Slogun "How It Ends" Picture 10"

White Rabbit Records

Hmm... a very nice set of pic LP put inside an embossed, thick see-through plastic sleeve. When the 10" arrived separate from the sleeve, it seemed that it wouldn't fit inside the sleeve at all. But with a little force it goes inside. The record itself offers nothing new to fans of Slogun. Loud noise walls and typical Slogun vocal style. There is variation in how the noise is made. On the A-side you find the most aggressive noise blast and on B-side there is almost calm electronic buzz. When I saw a video made of Slogun's live show in Deadly Actions IV, it made me think about the vocals. On the records they sound rather high pitched and repeating similar rhythms. Live the vocals sounded ultra aggressive with brutal and quite a low pitched tone. I wish he would use such style sometimes in the studio works as well. (M)

Contact: www.white-rabbit-records.org

Slogun "Murder U.S.A." 2x7"

L.S.D. Organisation

Color vinyls, color gatefold sleeve, color postcards. The usual L.S.D.O. style, but this time the record is not too limited. I would imagine a 1000 copies takes a while to find new homes. I think a double 7" is not so good a format. I'd rather get the same material on a 10". In this case the songs are so short that you have to be fast like a DJ, right there next to the turntable to turn the next side. I'm lazy enough that turning sides between 3-4 minutes feels too much... Anyway, the music is - although not best - still guaranteed Slogun. Simple noise with vocals and good lyrics. I think the "Kill to Forget" or "Written in Blood" CDs are the best from him so far. (M)

Some Asian Females Bodybuilders "Natalia Kim" CDr Verato Project

Very peculiar name for a Spanish project and also the apparent concept of the material is peculiar since it seems to be more or less dedicated to an Asian female bodybuilder, Natalia Kim. Her photos adorn the sleeve in bright colours. Not the kind of woman I'd go for but whatever makes them Spaniards tick. The material itself is pretty annoying. Just some very minimalist high frequency sounds. Actually the sounds are a lot louder than with the usual 'minimalistic' stuff and actually create some sort of textures every now and then, but mainly it's just really high frequency sines and clean feedback -like noises. If it's meant to irritate, they've succeeded. The sounds don't have the strength nor intensity to maintain interesting, so all they do is annoy me and make my tinnitus worse. (J)



Sophia "Aus der Welt" 10"

Erebos Odora

Although quickly following the debut CD with this 10", by the time I actually got around to reviewing this item, the second CD was already out. Anyway, the brown colour of the vinyl is here encased in a matching brown cover, with the spot varnished cover image (taken during the bombing of London), being a visual that certainly suits the massive brooding orchestrations cut into the record. Opener "Strength Through Sorrow" being a slow orchestral piece is based on a heavy use of choral voices and pounding percussion, arriving at a sound that could be said to be a partial mix of Arcana (of course) and In Slaughter Natives - which are both complimentary comparisons in my view. Second track "March of a New King" is obviously a march, here based on shrill snare rolls and flute tune, with the track increasing its urgency as it progresses, likewise including spoken vocals that rises within the mix. Side B arrives with the title track; a composition of slow sweeping orchestral beauty that could easily have been a track lifted from an Arcana, albeit for the fact it lacks the trademark male/female choir vocals. Fourth and final piece "Sono De Ignis" ups the ante once more with a heavy percussive and orchestral piece - yet reigning in the composition to accommodate a slow but masterful pace. Sophia impressed on their debut and continue to impress here. Recommended. (R)

Contact: www.errebosodora.net

Sophia "Herbswerk" CD

Cold Meat Industry

With a bridging 10" ep released between the debut album and this, the second album, Sophia continue going from strength to strength without necessarily altering their tactics that have won them accolades thus far. Again, and as with prior releases, this is militant neo classical music on a grand scale, ranging from brooding depressive segments (such as the first track "Miserere" built on a backbone of deep choir vocals), through to rousing percussive tracks such as the title track that uses slow hammering percussion (booming kettle, typani and snare drums), orchestral strings, French horns and a choir voice chanting the track's title. As is with the previous recordings, I have made passing comparisons with label mate In Slaughter Natives, which in my opinion is still relevant here given "March of Strength" again reminds me of I.S.N at his most brooding (as per his "Purgate My Stain" album). As for the depressive aura of "Inner Turmoil", it certainly shines strongly, yet the layering of minimal sweeping textures has additionally enhanced the atmosphere by giving it a distant and morose sound, anchored to the earthly realm only by a meandering piano tune. In reference to "Copper Sun" I admit it does not come much more powerful then this, where the stately orchestral layers, heavy percussion and choir voices are all presented in a massive grandiose fashion. Alternately "My Salvation" being purely constructed with choir textures and lone spoken voice, is meditative in ambience and giving some respite from the shrill orchestral battle cries of other album tracks. With eight tracks in all, again my only complaint (as with Arcana and Sophia albums thus far), is that they are generally on the short side, but this time such criticism is negated by the fact

that the prior "Aus der Welt" 10" ep has been included as a bonus, pressed as a mini 3" CD and including its own miniature slip case (being great news for those too lazy to get the 10" or alternately who don't own a record player). Anyway word from Peter Pettersson is that a third CD is already on the way, including a reevaluation of sound and direction for the project. Let's us sit back then and wait to shall be delivered! (R)

Soulcriddle "Dreams of an Invalid Soul" Demo CDr

A new German artist presenting material which is extremely difficult to describe. Elements of industrial, ambient, electronica and experimental techno appear here, but not often mixed together which means the styles of the tracks differ from each other. The opening track "Hallucination" really caught my attention with a somewhat industrial -like feel, but when the third track "Noisy V1.0" kicked in with some almost hip hop -style beats, I lost my interest completely. Although most of the tracks on this disc have some nice ideas in them, they appear far too incoherent. Also, there's usually just one part in each track which is being repeated over and over again with slight modifications and usually the repetition simply becomes too much. The sounds are all computer generated and even though I found them quite original, they could have been a bit more organic especially in parts where they pretend to sound like metal junk noises etc. This definitely wasn't my cup of tea but Soulcriddle could still come up with something interesting in the future, who knows? (J)

Contact: Soulcriddle, c/o R. Herling, Dr.-Th.-Neubauer Str. 19, 07546 Gera, Germany. www.soulcriddle.com



Stegm "Abstinence" CDr

Soulworm Editions

Stegm is an up-and-coming harsh noise artist hailing from the U.S., and if I've understood correctly, most of his works are dealing with some S/M or pornographic themes. Well, apart from the imagery on the sleeves (again wonderfully designed by Soulworm Editions) which is fetish and S/M themed, there's really no one way of telling it just by listening to the material on the disc. The first two tracks are harsh ambient styled, creating a sort of an ominous atmosphere before the third track "Dislocated" bursts into harsh noise. The noise moves along nicely, concentrating pretty much on intense high frequencies, but often goes into violent clashes of what appears to be metal junk noise through some effects. The sound quality is usually very crisp and clear, making the whole thing a bit too clinical at some points, but luckily it doesn't manage to ruin the whole thing. The tracks are nicely varied in style with some more calm and threatening pieces coming between the more harsh noise material, creating a good contrast and keeping the disc interesting. Tracks like "Dying Breath" and "Vital Existence" are quite close to power electronics or death industrial actually, yet without vocals or samples, and this is exactly the kind of diversity which I appreciate a lot. There undoubtedly are a lot of new bands coming out all the time, but in case you're not interested in checking them all out, Stegm just might be worth it. (J)

Stegm "Sugar Shower" CDr

Trauma Tone Recordings

Has Stegm changed or do I just remember differently? This one is still very harsh, but more of power electronics type. I'd say it's close to Slogun. Thick and brutal, but often a simple wall of noise and vocals. Stegm has more variation in the noise as well as vocal styles/effects. Sometimes it's sheer electronic noise blast, sometimes with more rhythmic noise, but based on loops, not drum machines. Many tracks develop or change in the middle. This is very good stuff to listen to. I wouldn't be surprised to see this re-released on vinyl or CD in the future! The CDr comes with printed lyrics of obsessed sexual topics. (M)

Contact: www.traumatone.lwarp.com

Stimbox "Lupus Tuberculosis" 3"CDr

Tabula Rasa

Interesting work from Stimbox in the Dermatology Series. He presents 21 short untitled pieces which nonetheless play as they were just one track. Instead of the traditional harsh noise material, Stimbox shows a more experimental approach where really loud distorted drones are being delayed and thus create textures of looping sounds. There are more noisy elements as well and as the track proceeds it constantly develops more towards intense harsh noise and eventually reaches the point of being just a massive wall of noise. The sounds are enjoyably loud and clear enough to retain the essential power. Great material! Limited edition of 100 copies. (J)

Stimbox "5:51" Card CDr

PACrec

More original sound can be heard instead of just brutal pedal noise. Some junk metal abuse and analog synth type of sound. It's 5:51 of harsh noise just as you can expect from the owner of the harshnoise.com site/label. This is not full blast non-stop noise as I usually expect from Stimbox, but short dynamic bursts of noise with occasional moments of silence. Very well done and it's good that 50 copies were made, instead of 20-25 like many early Pac Rec discs. (M)



Streicher "War Without End" CD

Cold Spring Records

This kills. It's good to see something for my own taste coming on Cold Spring once in a while. They have done a lot of keyboard/neoclassical etc records, but once in a while some decent power electronics/noise comes out. This is the debut Streicher CD and serves as a good view to its career. All of the tracks are collected from old tapes. Some are short cuts of the longer tracks and some re-named etc. These present the instrumental side of Streicher. You won't be hearing Ulex Xane's own trademark vocal style here. The album is not so aggressive, but more like a soundtrack to war. Really original result is created with various different sources and lo-fi analog recording methods. Indeed Streicher sounds different from pretty much everybody in the noise/pe scene and that is an achievement these days! Dark rumbling noise sounds, military samples, physical boot kicking of junk objects, analog synth, army gear, etc. There is still lots of old Streicher which could have been included. For example "Gnados" tape from '92 is brilliant. We'll have to wait and see if some of those jewels will be put out later and what will the new Streicher sound like. (M)

Survival Unit "Running on Emptiness" 3"CDr

Death Aesthetics

3 tracks are all in the same index number. Survival Unit sounds very death industrial style this time, very close to the atmosphere known from BDN, Mörder Machine and the alike. Slow pulsing bass-synth drone and highly delayed cold voice on the top. Some sounds of a tortured woman in the back. SU continues with a similar very simple style, getting closer to "German" p.e. sound which continues until the end of the disc for 2 tracks. Not bad at all, but SU has not been able to find it's own identity yet. (M)

Contact: Somnambulant Corpse Recordings, PMB201, 15127 NE 24th St., Redmond, WA 98052, USA. www.somnambulantcorpse.com

Syndikat "Folkmod" 3"CDr

Soulworm Editions

To me, Syndikat was a totally new Swedish acquaintance, and as often in my case, judging by the visuals and titles, I wasn't expecting too much from this. Luckily, this turned out to be a nice one. The opening track amusingly combines several trademark Swedish elements of industrial/power electronics, i.e. choir samples, speech samples in both English and Swedish, along with some pretty intense distorted electronics. The noise part in the first track isn't that special, as its only a wave of heavy low end rumble with some higher frequency screeches appearing every now and then on top of the samples. It's still a good track. The second one is more based on simple (possibly) analog synth abuse with more choir samples and some chime sounds. Some noisier elements come along at some point, but it's still quite simple. With a bit more variation it would be good. The third track (there are actually three tracks here, although they are divided into six parts) must be the best one here with the most variation and noisiest electronics. The choir samples are still there and the spoken samples as well, but the layers of electronics are more intense and aggressive. All in all, this is a nice little disc from a promising new Swedish act who could still use a little development and personal touch, but whom should by all means already be noticed as being among the up-and-coming Swedish industrial/power electronics acts. (J)

Taint "...I'm a Whore" Card CDr

Biteworks/PACrec

Limited edition of 40 numbered copies. This is a free give-away CDr made for Nuit et Brouillard's Deadly Actions V. Some CDr's were given to random audience, some to other bands, some thrown into the urnals at the festival - where enthusiastic fans grabbed them. "...I'm a Whore" looks like other PACrec releases. About 4 minutes of 2002-era Taint. The sound follows the style and atmosphere of most of his recent works. Vocals, feedback and analog synth used for violent and rather high pitched sound. A good track, although doesn't rise to the level of his best works. (M)

Contact: www.biteworks.blogspot.com

Tapecrusher "Crush All Stereotypes" CDr

Hammasratas

One of the rare CDr's on Hammasratas which are not T. Kandelin's (=the guy who runs the label) own projects. Awful "funny" covers, insert and song titles, and the music didn't start too promising either. Most likely created with a computer. Starts with 6 minutes of Finnish language weather report with one speaker normal and other doing the same reversed. Next up is a track created mostly with a sound that could be the sound of a camera taking a picture and additional cheap sci-fi movie laser-pistol "zap!" sounds. The 3rd track sounds like someone doing rhythmic German power electronics with a toy keyboard. The 4th one is useless too. The 5th track is the first one to capture some attention. Weird high-pitched electronic sound. Very simple and monotone, but somehow it grabs my attention. It definitely lasts too long, though. During 9 minutes it's almost the same sound, except in the middle they try to ruin the atmosphere with a stupid pop music fragment. Before the 11th track you've heard several short and often useless sound sculptures. The last track again has some attempt to create good noise. It's the best one on the CDr, but I'm sorry to say still much below the average noise tape. (M)



**Tarmvred "Subfuc" CD
Ad Noiseam**

With bleak looking cover art that to me would suggest a dark ambient project, Tarmvred's debut is far removed from this perception, and likewise hailing from Sweden, I can say that I was not at all expecting an album mixing some furious rhythmic industrial/noise elements with heavy techno club oriented breaks. Sounds like an unusual mix? Well, with extended song formats (most tracks run 10 minutes or longer) Tarmvred have created a diversely complex and deeply engaging album. With the tracks often commencing slowly, they gradually hit their stride over drawn out introductory sections, before launching headlong into slamming beats and breaks. But not to give the impression that is all about these breaks vying for supremacy (as one overlaps another), it is the other elements of minor key oriented tunes and snippets of blasting static and noise (playing out their respective parts), that really gives rise to the originality of this release. While continually tangential throughout the compositions, the album rarely degenerates into an uncoordinated mess, rather, skilfully traversing a knives edge of strict structure and freeform improvisation which makes it all the more an inspired and energetic listen. With each track forging its own identity within the broad confines of the album (and I do mean BROAD!), it only highlights the diversity - with one track even incorporating a sample of some lush female vocals. Maximising the format, the album runs right up to the outer edge at 73 minutes, and of the seven tracks in total, it is the last one on offer that is credited as being a remix by Converter, who has tackled the album's fourth track (and as for this remix, Converter does a fine job of creating a sometimes minimalist, but more often then not harsh and whiplashing version to round out this furious album). A grand album indeed and I'm sure the newish label Ad Noiseam would be rather chuffed with having this group on their roster considering this album could have easily slotted into the roster of one of a few larger rhythmic industrial oriented labels. (R)

**Tarmvred "Onomatopoeic" 3"CDr
Ad Noiseam**

For those who can't get enough of this new Swedish project, this limited 3" CDr (read: 75 copies) was released in unison with the debut CD (reviewed above), but showcases a different side to the project - that of a less harsh sound, with cleaner more straight forward structure. Likewise the only track by Tarmvred proper is the title track, as the other three are essentially remixes of Tarmvred's material (undertaken by other artists). Title track is a pure rhythmic industrial/techno piece containing multiple cascading beat sequences in a relatively fast paced offering, chopping and changing throughout. Generally staying on a straight track direction wise, late in the track it shifts into a great section of trance techno complete with female vocals, stretching the track to over 10 minutes in length. Aural Blasphemy's remix of "E.C.W" is a muffled and suffocating version that (almost) obliterates the beat oriented structures to create a great rhythmic death industrial vibe. Any Future up next tackle a remix of "Amfetakrom", positively morphing the track into texturally harsh piece of part drone and part rhythm. Last remix is a track called "Mourning" overhauled by Digidroid into a rather eyebrow raising and very club friendly piece consisting of clean beats, female vocals and melodious programming (totally unexpected but very nice indeed). Probably too limited to get any wide recognition, this is still a nice accompaniment to the full length by showcasing some alternate sounds of Tarmvred. (R)

**TEF "Seudoczemna Piogeno" 3"CDr
Tabula Rasa**

Part 9 in the Dermatology Series is the U.S. artist TEF presenting five untitled tracks of harsh noise. The first thing that comes to mind is that its pretty traditional stuff and definitely brings nothing new to the genre. Its very fast paced with lots of excellent noise elements following each other, keeping a nice fluency and making it very dynamic. Just really intense and well made harsh noise - nothing more, nothing less. (J)

**TEF "Machination of a Corner" Card CDr
PACrec**

Fast and furious machine noise. Reminds me of mid 90s Merzbow sound. I listened to this 4 times in a row and could put it on repeat if I just had more time. Nothing new in harsh noise, but well done and entertains you also with multiple listens! (M)

**Terra Sancta "Anno Domini" mCD
self released**

For a bit of brief background information, this professionally pressed mCD represents a re-recorded and re-mastered version of Terra Sancta's debut demo CDr - and who are Terra Sancta you ask? Well they may be rather obscure, but this lack of current profile does not negate the high quality coming from this Australian dark ambient project. When I first heard the original CDr version of this back in 2000, I was amply surprised by the quality and maturity of the project, but at that stage did comment that while there was no complaint with the sound and production, that a good bit of mastering work would assist in evolving it from great to brilliant. Well, with none other then Phil Easter of Malignant Sound Technologies (the studio offshoot of Malignant Records) having been enlisted to remaster this recording, it has had the result as I expected - the breadth and depth of sound has been expanded into wide screen, cinematic proportions! As for the actual music of Terra Sancta, it suitably aligns itself with the early to mid 90s sound of the infamous Cold Meat Industry label, by taking its cues from stunning acts such as Raison d'Etre and Desiderii Marginis. Yet this is not so much as a criticism of plagiarism rather an indicator of the depth and maturity that has been created on this re-release of the first official recording. Three lengthy tracks span the 32 minutes of music mixing sparse textural soundscapes, deathly drawn out

keyboard melodies and smatterings of sampled (predominantly female) choir vocals. Depth and sparseness of sound is used positively as a compositional element, particularly noteworthy when a sorrowful (sampled) tune of a middle eastern instrument rises briefly out of the depressive undercurrent of the first piece "Desert Earth". Late in the piece the sparse textural elements take on track's moniker, with the aura being akin to searing desert winds whipping up a blinding sandstorm. Second track "The Infinite Lurking" is not as gentle as the title may suggest, commencing calmly with multi-layered choir vocals prior to fierce mid ranged layers arcing into the composition (illustrating the final death throws perhaps?). Things do calm down again, but only very briefly before massive drawn out keyboard drones/catatonic melody commandingly stride into contention and remain for the majority of the piece. A middle eastern flavour is again apparent on "Lithified" with (again sampled) wind instrument melody that gives way to a mid ranged slow keyboard tune that evokes a distant mournful aura around it (also set against sounds of slowly dripping water and other assorted field type recordings). It is good to finally see a growing number of Australian acts working in the obscurer aspects of dark experimental music, and to highlight that Terra Sancta are producing compositions of a world class standard, I can announce that they have been snapped up by Malignant Records to release their official full length debut "Aeon" (hopefully) before the end of 2002. In the mean time it would be well worth your time to contact sole member Greg Good to snap up a copy of this official, yet limited mCD re-pressing. Highly recommended. (R)

Contact: terra_sancta@hotmail.com

The Nihilistik Kitchen Unit "Mechanical Torture Monster" CDr

Hammassratas

I was almost amazed that I heard decent noise here! The 1st track on the CDr starts to be close to normal harsh noise you can honestly listen without thinking it's not too good. The whole CDr isn't top quality, but it doesn't go much lower, so it's still the best that I have heard from T. Kandelin's projects! The last track is probably the most intense and reaches standards that we should expect from released material. If they could get the channels mixed a bit, it would sound even better, but especially the last track is already pleasure for noise fanatics. If you want to check out what Hammassratas has released, try this and the Gelsomina CDr! (M)

**The Nordic Miracle "We Shall Provide" CD
Humburg 2002**

Lasse Marhaug and Tore Honore Boe return to "roots" of their noise career. Like the extensive liner notes explain: "TNM was started on a direct request from those who want to drown themselves in sexy and pure noise cascades instead of the jellyfish squeaks and beeps the media has defined as being noise." For 3 pages they explain several things, but what this mainly is, is just getting back to the spirit of tape scene noise which was there when Marhaug and many others started. They do not present anything provocative, no message, no content, except loud noise. That's still fine with me. Good noise is good noise and IF sound is the defining factor, you don't need to pretend to have other content than that. 3 long live sets are digitally sharp and brutal, but because of the live situation and supposedly simple set-up's, they keep it very harsh and not too "clean". It has variation, but no bullshit. Just like said before, cascades of pure noise, no jellyfish squeaks or beeps! (M)



**Tho-So-Aa "Enrielle" CD
Art Konkret**

This is a re-release of Tho-So-Aa's tape on Art Konkret, originally released in 1995, now including also three previously unreleased tracks. I haven't heard the original tape version, so this was all new material to me. Tho-So-Aa presents here some pretty good dark ambient combined with hints of industrial in the form of some more intense sounds. Most of the tracks are quite simplistic, basing themselves around background drones and then adding some different elements on top, such as deeply echoing metal junk sounds and some more sonorous, almost melodic sounds. Nonetheless it never gets melodic in the musical sense of the word. Most of the sounds are apparently created with acoustic instruments and the outcome definitely is quite different compared to artists using only the most hi-tech equipment. Not saying if its better or not, but there's a different kind of presence to this material. This CD hardly brings anything new to the dark ambient (I don't think it did that even back in 1995), but its a nice release anyway, representing the more organic blend of droning dark ambient and industrial. The CD comes in a full colour A5 sleeve and is limited to 500 copies. (J)

...Today I'm Dead "Menstrual Gold" CD

Slaughter Productions

I have liked ...Today I'm Dead since I first heard them. After a CDr and a CD, this new full length continues in exactly the same way, so what else I can say? I still like what they do. Highly Brighter Death Now inspired with a sick Italian touch. "I'm For Sale", "Young Flesh 2", "To Kill a Pregnant Woman", "Shemale", "Filthy Utero" and other titles leave me wanting to see the lyrics. Sick and fanatical feeling of clinical slow beats and strong humming analog synthesizers, crisp high end electronics and most of all, slowly echoing possessed vocals create a very nice atmosphere. If you haven't tried ...T.I.D. yet, I suggest to give it a try. Everything else but the last track is pure enjoyment. (M)

**Toroidh "Europe is Dead" CD
Cold Spring Records**

Toroidh return with the second instalment of their "European Trilogy" with "Europe is Dead" following on from the debut CD "those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it". Whilst the first instalment contained a mixture of brooding

dark ambience, military percussion and neo-classical sampling, "Europe is Dead" follows a similar path to the debut, but here sees the introduction of neo-folk elements. And I would have to say that from my perspective it is through the use of the acoustic guitars and clean sung vocals, that the sound of Toroidh is all the stronger for this added diversity. Presented in 8 parts, track 1 is an introductory piece containing sampled orchestral tune intermixed with brooding undercurrent and era speeches to create an aura of the early decades of the 20th Century. While the heavy brooding vibe at the start of track 2 does not abate for the track's length, it is lightened somewhat by the neo-folk elements of slow strummed guitar and morose commanding vocals. Tracks 3 and 4 are tracks that really bridge one to the next, containing sections of dense neo classically tinged ambience that at times brings to mind the French project Les Joyeux De La Princesse (which can really only be a compliment). The 5th piece arrives as a lengthy 17 minute passage, with the middle section again showcasing a fantastic neo-folk sound, using acoustic guitars, stately percussion and a vocals which chant a chorus of "lead us to war, lead us to battle, lead us to victory. lead us to peace" (later sections of this track return to a brooding martial industrial/ neo-classical sound and not too far removed from the early works of Der Blutharsch). Another highlight of the disc is the 6th track that reverts to a neo-folk style using an acoustic guitar offset with booming timpani percussion, whilst track 7 contains a passage of muffled orchestral sounds, propaganda speeches and marching drums.

As for the cover the simplistic but stylishly designed dipack contains a central cross created from the images of four eagles heads rotating in a clockwise direction, and by virtue being printed in murky black and grey tones it suits the atmosphere of the disc perfectly. Lastly after hearing the progression from the debut, Toroidh is a project to watch out for, particularly as the final instalment of the trilogy ("Testament") should have already been released. (R)

**Tote Stadt / The Nautilus Deconstruction Split tape
Radio Obsolete Recordings**

If I understand correctly, this is no. 1 of the 8 different editions of the tape. Each being 25 copies. This one was in a normal tape box, with a hand painted tape, wrapped inside layers and layers of cassettes magnetic tape. If you wish to listen to the tape, you have to cut the tape and the whole packaging (except of one nail) is "ruined" and there is not really any other purpose than to throw them in the garbage bin. It took me months until I decided to open the packaging and then I was very positively surprised by Tote Stadt, who delivers very massive and intense industrial noise. Each track contains a different atmosphere. They do talented combinations of harsh noise to nearly melodic sequencer pieces, screaming voice, rhythms, etc. Well, it's hard to describe what is different from the usual here, but Tote Stadt manages to create something of their own here. Beginning of the tape is better, in the end they reach calm industrial drum beat style. It was a pleasure to listen all the tracks, though. The Nautilus Deconstruction is not for my taste. Goofy vocal noises and tape manipulations. Lots of silence, and then somebody making acoustic noise out of a plastic bag and blurring out some vocal noise. This side is nothing but a waste of time to me. (M)

Contact: R.O.R., c/o Andrew Seal, 129 Farmer st. #3, Buffalo, NY 14207, USA. tote_stadt@yahoo.com

**Tugend "Occult Transmission" CDr
Sommabulant Corpse Recordings**

Tugend's earlier "Optimism is for the Weak" CDr was amazing. Even though WWII is so much used topic for industrial bands, even with a stereotypical approach Tugend was creating something I really enjoyed. Old school and little lo-fi industrial, reminding me a lot of the early Militia recordings. This new CDr is darker than before. The disc starts with deep ambient soundscapes and after a few tracks it goes to rhythmic material. They use old keyboards, loops, drum machines, long echoes and more. In general they have plenty of elements which I often dislike, such as a drum machine or keyboards, but their approach is different from the usual modern way. Something that the earliest Laibach, Militia, SPK and others could provide. I still consider "Optimism is for the Weak" better than this, but I still could recommend as well. (M)

**Turbund Sturmwerk / Inade "Peryt Shou" Split LP
Loki Foundation**

This being the second instalment in the Germania Occulta series (as with the first), is one of those items worth its price for packaging alone. Being housed in deluxe gatefold cover and with stunning 24 page/ 10" size booklet, you will need to move quickly to secure one of these 1110 copies (555 copies in red vinyl or 555 copies in black vinyl).

Quoting from the promo sheet the subject of this release is: "the German occultist Peryt Shou, one of the most important German esoteric authors in the 20th century. During the past eighty years many considerable spirit/border scientists professed themselves to Peryt Shous Astro-Logos-doctrine and quoted his writings". The blurb goes to further describe: "Turbund Sturmwerk and Inade present ethereal monumental tunes which begin to work in spheres where an omnipresent darkness turns to deepest beauty. This is a masterpiece of the two exceptional projects and a certification for the serious interest to take the attempt of connecting meta cosmic knowledge with music into sounding forms". Can't argue with that now can you?

Anyway, Turbund Sturmwerk's side presents an esoteric slant on slow morphing orchestral manipulations. With a minimal hint of melody and structure, the mood slowly swells with the inclusion of each new layer, culminating in a female voice reciting what seems to be a spiritual evocation. This section slowly shifts off into the next musical segment consisting of an understated piano/ organ dirge that builds into a slow orchestral piece, complete with distant tympani percussion. Third and final segment for Turbund Sturmwerk is the most experimental, built on distant forlorn orchestral elements and manipulated German female voice samples, creating an subdued yet quite unnerving dark ambient affair. Overall Turbund Sturmwerk's contributions are slightly different and certainly more freeform and low key then I expected, but then again I guess the project has managed to be rather eclectic in sound over their three albums and various compilation appearances.

As for Inade's side, I cannot think of another group that has

continually flawed me with each new musical track, with 'kwa-non-sch' (a 17 minute awe inspiring musical journey), being no exception. Likewise encompassing an album's worth of ideas, Inade manage to incorporate this seamlessly and effortlessly into a single composition. Teetering on the edge of the spiraling corkscrew vortex, the track quickly sucks the listener deep into its inner recesses, only for it to expand out into a rather urgent passage of dark ambience consisting of a deep rhythmic pulse, muted orchestral tones and reverb treated speech sample. The mid section of the track moves towards an archaic tribal percussive sound (as the background textures writhe and heave), yet in entering the home stretch, a serene sense of calm takes over with distant choir vocals and slow, looped drones to gradually draw the composition to a conclusion. Does dark ambient get better than this?...for the majority of dark ambient project the answer is a resounding 'NO', but in the case of Inade I'm sure it will with subsequent recordings....

Again Loki Foundation have proved their cult status with this release, which from concept, to musical content, to packaging, is beyond essential. (R)

V/A Back Ground Music for Midnight Driving CD Full Volume Agency

I have to say this was a disappointment to me. The first release of the label was a Gerogerigegege CD and now they have an 8 artist compilation. The Gerogerigegege offers lo-fi noise fuzz with a cheap drum machine beat, but that's ok sounding and the best on this compilation. Label guys who used to do Mamarracho are here under the name Mmrrh, but the style is noisy drum'n'bass. Same goes for everybody else. There is no noise really. Just drum'n'bass, distorted disco and electrobeat/industrial techno. a034, Quattro Valvole, Somatic Responses, Lux Mammoth, Orchestra Giallo and Martin Rev are the others found on this CD. If you like "dance floor industrial", then this could be for you. (M)

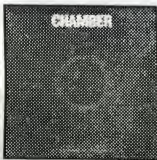
V/A Be Very Afraid: Electronica Obscura CD Dead Mind Records

I was afraid that this CD might be full of joke/humor noise, when the only band I've heard before was Crank Sturgeon vs. Outermost collaboration. And I was partly right. Monotonos offers monotonous electronic noise. It's almost ambient. Rather good stuff. But the next two, Baglady and Ostomy offer plain stupid sounding techno/rhythm electronics. Crank Sturgeon vs. Outermost and a handful of others offer decent noise. Truck Van Rental is little weird, but nice high pitched electronics. Then again you get Kamp Chaos who offers some African type of chants and lame industrial rhythms. Almost makes me puke. I could imagine this to be a hit in an industrial dance club for dreadlock hippies. Rubber o Cement VS. James Twig Harper, Dead Husbands, Kingdom Scum and Tumour all offer more or less goofy experimental noise. Buckettoissors offers a very good and long track, being the highlight of the CD. In general this CD is not really for my taste of noise in general, but offers a couple of good noise tracks and the rest is for those into "electronica obscura"... noisy fun & goofy, filled with moments of techno and drum'n'bass. (M)

V/A Build Your Weapons CD Paradise Noise Productions

Here's a really low profile compilation with four bands whom I'd assume all to be French; Fulcrum, Noisembroy, Ghetto Noise Mutation and Mourmansk 150, of which only the last one was previously familiar to me. Fulcrum opens the disc with a really lo-fi track with opening and closing samples, really static electronics (if you disregard the cell phone interference noise at one point) and pretty weird, clean shouting vocals. Vaguely reminds me of old Bastard Noise, but the lo-fi sound takes away any strength there might have been. There is also a second Fulcrum track later on the disc and it's pretty much the same stuff. Noisembroy offers three harsh noise tracks which are a bit ruined by the muddy sound quality as well. There's a lot of things happening, but mostly you can just hear heavy bass rumble and the noise beneath that. The tracks didn't sound too bad actually, but would demand a louder and at least a bit clearer sound quality. Ghetto Noise Mutation does one track of basic harsh noise. Mostly just electronics which remain quite static throughout the track and fail to make an impression. Mourmansk 150 closes the disc with four tracks and as usually with him, it's a bit hit or miss. There are good parts in the tracks but as a whole they sound dull and reach nowhere close to Mourmansk 150's full potential. Just simple power electronics and noisy death industrial. I'm glad someone puts out compilations with small or unknown bands, but I found this one to be quite weak, especially because of the dreadful sound quality on most of the tracks. The compilation comes in a special plastic sleeve with black/white artwork etc. Limited edition of 50 copies. (J)

Contact: paradisenoise@aol.com



V/A Chamber CD Cold Spring Records

Rather than a proper compilation, this CD is a budget priced sampler that showcases some of current talent amassed on the Cold Spring roster. So after perusing the track listing, it appears that the majority of the tracks have either already been released on recent Cold Spring albums or otherwise will be included on upcoming albums. For those wanting a compilation of exclusive material I guess you will be disappointed, but then again the budget priced ethic should be encouragement enough to allow you to sample the sounds of some artists you may have not otherwise checked out. Notwithstanding, there is one exclusive track included, being the final ever recording from the now defunct Folkstorm (recorded by the project in July, 2001). Having a low fi pulsating sound "Hail the Queen" contains some fantastic processed vocals, and whilst the track is obviously power

electronics, it more seething and subdued than other Folkstorm offerings.

As for the remainder of the tracks, rather than reviewing each track individually, the sampler spans genres of neo-classical, heavy electronics, dark ambient and martial industrial, and although varied in sound is a surprisingly strong collection of tracks from the artists featured. Projects showcased include: Ignus Fatuus, Mark Snow (yes the X-Files music composer), Laibach, Endvra, Novatron, Bain of Pain, Benedikt Middel (composer of the "Necromantik" soundtrack), Schloss Tegal, Von Thronstahl, Toroidh, Sleep Research Facility, The Days of the Trumpet Call, Kerovnian and A Challenge of Honour. Final comment?: with the price, content and stylish gatefold card sleeve, this is a recommended release. (R)

V/A Chloroform II CDr Cyber Blast Records

A CDr comp by a new Dallas label that runs all over the sonic spectrum. Newer bands like Lysogeny, Death Threat and Inhalant show that there is something in the water in the Dallas metropolis and I want to drink it. The more known bands like Richard Ramirez and Eugenics Council deliver the goods as well. This comp runs the gauntlet from Ant-Zen style beats to walls of harsh noise. A good comp that introduces new bands, a new label and lets you know about what is happening in Texas. (A)

Contact: www.geocities.com/cyberblastrecords



V/A Difficult Music for Difficult People II CDr RRs.R

Living up to its name, this is a pretty confusing compilation with a running time of over 78 minutes and 41 featured artists, stylistically ranging from harsh noise to recordings of kids playing and from glitch and minimalism to noise core and some complete nonsense. Most of the bands and artists are ones I've never heard of before, but just to mention a few of the more known ones: Cock ESP, Eugenics Council, Suspicion Breeds Confidence, Mourmansk 150, K2, Outermost, Bastard Noise, Syssisspsk, Jan AG, etc. It's pretty difficult to describe the material on this compilation in an understandable manner, but perhaps that's the point. I must admit that I liked about 5% of the tracks here and they were mostly the harsh noise stuff, but the rest of it was interesting at least. The tracks are usually so short that even the most stupid and annoying tracks don't get so boring that you'd have to get up and skip them. All in all, not the kind of compilation I'd get all excited about, but it was nice to come across something like this for a change. (J)

V/A First CD Operative Records

Being the debutante release for this new UK based label, it incidentally is run by a collective of artists of which many (if not all?) are featured on this compilation. AntiChildLeague are first off the starting blocks, being a project of Gaya Donadio - organiser of London's Hinoeuma Malediction monthly live industrial night. "Germ of Decay" as AntiChildLeague's offering, presents a seething power/heavy electronics sound where I am somewhat reminded of Anenzephalia's approach. Here the slow caustic noise manipulations and loops intertwine with well placed samples creating an impressive track that has picked up my interest in hearing the further evolution of this project. Alternately, Leisurehive inhabit a more traditional 'industrial band' type sound, but as this scene has never really been my forte, their track sounds much like many other slow moody pieces of this genre. Knifeladder on the other hand present an absolutely storming track in the form of "hymn". Incessant rolling percussion woven into a framework of droning/static noise, tortured vocal wails and rumbling bass, made all the more eerie with the use of a what sounds like a snake charmers flute. After hearing the strength of this offering I can't wait for the full length CD. With a similar moniker, the group Knives present a track "Lights Out" which sounds not much more than an improvised jam, or better still, what you would expect to hear from a band at the conclusion of a live set (not something I would rate personally though). Rise on their piece "N.Y.Cd" create an aura that spans clinical sounding experimental electronics through to a dark ambient tone that is very nice indeed. But moving on, "Angel" (being Shining Vril's piece) is far more avant-garde than what I have previously heard from the ritualistic project - here utilising a melange of chimes, percussion, scattered sounds, harmonic/disharmonic sound and trippy vocalisations. Next artist up Emblem, on their piece "Azazel" use a slow shifting soundscape of environmental recordings and synth layers, that slightly reminds me of Contrastate (or even Current 93 in their more experimental guise), but this perception has more to do with the prominent poetic spoken vocals used throughout. Here the track remains sullen and introspective until a sampled speech and orchestral track are feed into the mix to bring the track to an intense conclusion. The comically titled Muffpunch showcase "An Air of Random Menace", which accommodates a muffled wall of noise sound, however with its rough structure and obliterated vocals also leans towards a power electronics sound. Damn aggressive stuff but probably a bit too muffled in production for my liking though. Naevus are entirely different to the other tracks of the compilation given their track embodies a apocalyptic folk sound, and although a nice brooding piece of acoustic guitar, bass, synthesizers and understated male vocals, the lyrical content has me somewhat bemused (if you don't know what I mean listen to the opening lines!). On the other hand dark sonic experimentalist Andrew Liles, forges a slow morphing slab of sound on "A Certain Step" that has a clinical ambience to its shimmering sounds and although a touch different (ie: more subdued) to the live set I saw in March 2002, it is nonetheless a promising piece. Final compilation track "Pure Code" comes courtesy of antivalium, arriving as a static riddled slab of noise that is almost orchestral in its scope and intensity. Here it is the crystalline production along with the forever

changing direction of the track that makes it such an intense listen. Being a compilation that presents a diverse range of (currently) London based artists, it is also worthy to mention the packing given this housed in a unusual frosted case, creating something different to the standard jewelcase format. (R)



V/A Heilige Feuer CDr Der Angriff

With a release that has been issued to commemorate the first ever industrial festival in Russia ("Heilige Feuer" held in St Petersburg on 9 December, 2000), each of the performing artists at the festival have subsequently contributed two exclusive tracks for this compilation (which is incidentally housed in a nice oversized cardboard booklet sleeve). Sal Solaris being a Russian project is the first artist up on the CD and manage to impress quite heavily. Whilst Sal Solaris may inhabit a dark ambient style, they present it with a tense, evocative edge via the compositions contains a slow, dense (and often pulsing rhythmic) undercurrent, including the occasional outburst of harsher metallic textures. Disembodied vocal chants in track 1 likewise affix a spiritual edge to proceedings and to an extent the overall sound and direction begs a comparison with Inade. Very promising overall. While Deutsch Nepal may have relatively silent with new tracks over the past few years, here the one and only Lina Baby Doll returns with two solid tracks. "Chitrine 1 (From Above)", being the first track, consists of a hallucinogenic blend of drawn out synth textures, background sound loops and repetitive (again looped) tribal hand percussion - quality stuff. "Drugmother" on the other hand is quite bizarre even by Lina's standards. With a more militant edge due to the slow snare percussion and shrill sound loops (likewise offset against an aggressive introductory vocal sample), the track sees Lina presenting vocals in full singing style. Whilst vocals may have never played a huge role within Deutsch Nepal, the commanding yet morose drawl of the delivery on this piece works well and certainly does suit the overall atmosphere of the song. It now just has me wondering what the next Deutsch Nepal CD will offer if this piece is any indication! As for the next artist, I have noted that when Albin is removed from the shackles of presenting tracks within the context of a full length album, that his compilation tracks are often quite different and often quite quirky - with the first Der Blutharsch track being no exception. If your wondering exactly what I mean, just listen to "Untitled 1" which is a hyped up and mostly programmed 'spaghetti western' styled jig of a song! Basically I would challenge most fans to pick this as a Der Blutharsch track if they were not told otherwise, and on first listen I actually found myself checking the track order to confirm this was in fact Der Blutharsch! Alternately the second untitled piece is more along the lines of a traditional Der Blutharsch track, however the slow sampled acoustic guitar and sampled chanted choir vocals used through that give the piece a refreshing air to the slow orchestral backing. As for Genocide Organ's two contributed tracks actually play out more as a single track by containing a slow and relatively quiet introductory passage, then all hell breaking loose in the second half. Commencing with a subdued rumbling soundscape, the mildly processed dialogue samples assist to set the scene (referencing civil disobedience and the struggle for revolution), where at the flick of a switch the track changes into a sadistic power electronics piece. This second bare fisted, white knuckled track "Comandos" uses a roaring/lurching rhythm as its focal point, where the screamed vocals are entirely obliterated in their distorted delivery (and being just another layer in the chaotic madness). Fantastically aggressive stuff indeed from one of the true masters of power electronics. Into the home stretch another Russian project Reutoff rounds out the disc, with their first track "The Day I Found Crystal Indian-Dolls" being a death industrial/industrial noise soundscape of evolving semi-orchestral sounds, dialogue samples and tense electric sound textures. Second track "Sweet Blood" is a tinge more aggressive with static riddled sound loops, dense sound textures and heavy rhythmic percussion that converge to create solidly grating and ominous effect. Again another promising act. On the whole "Heilige Feuer" is a solid compilation containing quality tracks from both well known and otherwise rising projects. (R)

V/A Incendium CD Loki Foundation

Similar to Cold Spring's "Chamber" compilation (reviewed above), this is a budget priced sampler compilation, consisting of tracks lifted from current and upcoming releases. The thirteen included tracks have been composed by nine projects, and while the overall sound encompasses wide ranging styles, the CD retains the very characteristic sound of the Loki Foundation label and side label Power and Steel. With contributing projects including: first law, turbund sturmwerk, predominance, inade, herbst9, bad sector, land:fire, ex:order and virologic (all projects are German based except for the Italian based bad sector), the compositions cover different scenes from dark ambient, heavy electronics, experimental industrial and power electronics. Again whilst there may not be any exclusive material, this release acts a great introduction to the sounds of some projects you may have not had an opportunity to sample before, and to have it said everything that has been released on Loki Foundation thus far had definitely been of worth. Available directly from Loki for 5 US/ euro worldwide (airmail postage included). (R)

V/A Information Apocalypse CD Annihilus

This is the kind of compilation I don't like that much. For me it's very good to mix noise and power electronics together, even with some dark ambient, but when it's a compilation which mixes power electronics with folk music or distorted dance music, for me it's very irritating. I don't see enough of connection with noise and

keyboard music/folk music/dance music. On "Information Apocalypse" there is no folk, but among great artists such as Control, Death Squad, Gruntsplatter, Abfall, etc. who deliver noise electronics can be found for me utterly dull "distorted beats" or whatever by Converter, Tarmvred, Unter Null, etc. Also many others deliver highly rhythmic stuff, luckily more based on loops instead of drum machines. It's over 70 minutes of stuff, so even if skipping over some "club hits", there is plenty of good material to listen to. The owner of the label who compiled this, also does Navicon Torture Technologies and this time he delivers a rather intense track. A band called Land, Fire (from Germany) also deliver a good Söldnergeist rip-off track. Nothing and Abfall are the ones closest to harsh noise. After all, if you are willing to do some programming to the playlist while listening to this compilation, it turns out to be a good one. Especially this will appeal to those who like digital and clean sound. (M)
Contact: www.annihilvs.org



V/A Noisy Germs Volume Three CDr Soulworm Editions

This is the first volume of the Noisy Germs compilation series I've come across, so I don't know anything about the previous ones. Anyway, presented on this disc are mostly Japanese and Polish (with the exception of Antenna 59 who appear to be Italian) noise acts, of which the Japanese ones are all pretty famous whereas the Polish ones mostly sound pretty obscure to me. Government Alpha opens the disc with "Light and Shade", a good blast of intense harsh noise and maybe one of the best tracks on the disc. Next up are three Polish acts of which Mantichora offers a more harsh ambient based track. White Nerve Connexion vs N-26 offer an experimental piece with hints towards microsound and electroacoustic genres. Vilpoc get back to some noise, but unfortunately lack a lot of power due to the absence of low end sounds. Japanese Daruin is next with a weird harsh ambient/industrial track which gets a bit boring towards the end. Antenna 59 offer some dirty electronics rumble with lots of noisy action on top, i.e. pretty traditional stuff. K2 do their trademark metal junk noise with loops and cuts, and sound very good as usual. MSBR present a peculiar piece with strange drones and blurring oscillator sounds on top of a white noise background that never really gets noisy but instead stays in the back. Palecam from Poland do some glitchy sounds which build into noise with loops and some cuts. ..QT? from Japan offer four short tracks of just as weird stuff as their name suggests; hyper fast cuts with glitchy sounds and noises combined to short blasts of extreme harsh noise, definitely not being my cup of tea. Polish Genetic Transmission do the noisiest track I've heard from them, starting with some spoken word thing and then going into full harsh noise. XV Parovek present a piece using only the most excruciating high frequency sounds possible, being extremely hard for the ears. I'd like to hear that track performed live! Thordorgan closes the disc with a pretty basic track of noisy loops and some white noise bursts. This is a nice compilation if in the past you were into the tape compilations containing all sorts of stuff from all sorts of noise acts, but if you're looking for some strictly defined material in terms of categories or concepts, then this isn't for you. There were some tracks that were excellent and some I could have done without, but that's the way it goes. (J)

V/A QFG 3CD Parametric

It's pretty impossible to write an in-depth review about such a massive compilation when the deadline has practically been a few weeks ago. First of all I must admit not having heard of about 90% of the artists presented here, but to mention a few of those that rang my bell: Ab Ovo, Mimetic, Mlada Fronta, Tin.RP, Ultra Milkmaids, De Mange Machine and Mourmansk 150. The style here varies from droning ambient to soft beats and from glitchy minimalism to power noise. I have to say most of it is not to my liking. I guess this presents the more techno-based end of experimental electronics and apart from a few acts, the material has failed to impress me. There are some pretty good ambient tracks in here and a few of the more harsh acts seemed to catch my attention, but still most of the material didn't offer me anything. I'm sure those interested in this sort of stuff will appreciate it, but I can't. On a more positive note, the packaging is really excellent! Beautiful 3-disc digipak with close-up photos of machinery etc. (J)

V/A 7hz CD Auscultare / Ground Fault Recordings

3 artists have recorded material in 7hz venue/studio. Scott Arford, also known as Radiosonde, has 2 tracks of very digital sounding electronic noise. Low, soft humming sound and very crisp high end hiss and fuzz. The 2nd of his tracks is thicker and "aggressive" sounding. Randy h.y.yau is less noisy than I've heard before. Still some short manic bursts of noise, but mostly staying on electronics. Michael Nine, also known as MK9 or Death Squad, presents high pitched electronics and reversed screaming voices. The 2nd one of the tracks is heavier electronic drones. It's an instrumental. All the bands have similar sound quality, but their way of creating the actual "composition" varies. (M)
Contact: www.23five.org

V/A Shit for an Answer Vol.2 tape Debia Records

Why do they do it? Torturing us with noise as in grabbing-for-some-object-in-a-paper-bag noise? Spitting-and-coughing-into-a-microphone noise? If you like your noise boring and uncreative "Shit for an Answer Vol.2" is for you. I don't know why anybody spends time in putting out such shit, not to mention the money it costs to mail it out to all contributing bands. There's a shitload of

bands on this tape. I'll not mention them all, only those who caught my ear for being such idiots who have nothing else to do with their spare time but creating boring shit like this. Tremor has a funny track called "Oohaaaahchicchic". One can hear a woman having an orgasm. It's probably a sample from porno movie. It MUST be a sample. I really can't imagine what sort of a woman is retarded enough to contribute some "vocals" to a shit track like this (perhaps a fat, ignored cunt who is happy with any attention she can get?). The vocals are distorted most of the time, almost sounding like an apocalyptic porno movie soundtrack. It could have been a great track if Tremor didn't use some retarded techno beat that abruptly begins and stops every two seconds. It sounds like Tremor was pushing keys instead of starting a standard rhythm on his keyboard. Sometimes too slow, sometimes too fast. I was happy when the track was finally over but my happiness didn't last. Another shit band, Histerezis Mozga, started. Boring noise and rhythm, sounding like an uninspired Sonar (and they also sound uninspired most of the time so you can imagine how Histerezis Mozga sounds). Anyway, it has a nice spoken word sample run through effects. If they had given it more time to create this track properly it would have been a nice track but now it sounds like they recorded it quick-quick because they couldn't wait for the opening hour of their favorite whorehouse. Cyborg's Underwear sounds like the dude was vacuuming his tape deck. He also spits and gargles in the mic, making suffocation sounds etc. He also uses a toy to create irritating sounds which drive me to kill. Also samples from Slovenian traditional music, ...and then he starts to giggle to eventually breaking down in laughter and laughs really loud. I guess he smokes too much marihuana. This tape comp. is two cassettes in boxes glued together, then covered with empty toilet rolls. Debia Records clearly shows us he intentionally releases shitnoise. The toilet rolls, the title, ...shit is exactly what you get for an answer. Side B starts off with Noise Migranaaa from Germany. This fellow uses AM sounds and low cheap keyboard tones recorded too loud. It has some charm to me. Some shit noise isn't that bad. I still dig the "Noise Annoys" tape comp. on Abnormal Tapes, a perfect example of drunk shit noise and crap grind but most of the tracks on "Shit for an Answer" doesn't do the trick for me. D.I.Y. fetishists will probably ejaculate over this tape. We can also hear S.U.I.C.I.D.E. Propaganda on this tape. This is my old project (R.I.P.). They used the poorest track for this comp tape I ever created. I really can't remember sending a demotape to Debia Records but since I am on the tape also I probably did when I was high on glue. Ultra Retarded Stupid Erik (aka Sonic Disorder) isn't that bad. He's doing the kind of shit noise I like: distorted pop music abuse with lots of overbub and death metal parody vocals as well! Stark Verstärkte Zvaghafte Planlose Aktivität (what a name!) pours out a cup of coffee while recording his keyboard noodlings and spoke word in German. I don't speak German so I don't know what he is saying but he obviously digs coffee. I think Nejc Pockar didn't reject any of the demos he got. "Debia" is a lot like the dutch word "debel" (and the French "debile") which means retarded. Debia Records is obviously proud of the shit they are putting out. Also worth mentioning is the pic on the enclosed piece of paper with all band names and addresses: it shows an old hag showing off some really big potatoes (and I don't mean tits). She's a farmer or something. Thank God she isn't showing her tits since she's really wrinkled and with one foot in the grave. If you recorded yourself while barfing or coughing really loud lately, send it to Debia Records 'cause they're looking for bands for vol.3. Also, Casio keyboard lovers will get hard over this tape too! (YA)

V/A Tel Aviv Aftermath CD Tophet Prophet

I haven't been keeping an eye on the Israeli scene too closely, but it feels like almost overnight there appeared a whole bunch of bands. This compilation apparently gives a good view to what is happening in the scene right now. First off, Grundik-Slava present a track with pretty dull experimental electronics. Soft bleeps going all over the place. New Jerusalem Defense Forces is a project by V. Gusis (Chaos as Shelter) and I. Krutogolov (Igor18) and they offer an industrial style piece with some rhythmic noise elements and distorted vocals deep in the mix. Igor18 has a more experimental approach with voices and manipulated instruments, sounding somehow pretentious. I've always liked Chaos as Shelter and he offers undoubtedly the best material on this disc. Chiming tones and drones combined with a shortwave radio voice. Screening does his usual bass manipulations and actually sounds at his best. Forma present perhaps the most interesting one of the experimental tracks here with a really dense sound range and flowing elements. HU is another Chaos as Shelter related project with a more experimental touch using a metal helmet as a sound source and resulting in fairly good concrete sounds. VectorScope does a weird rhythmic piece which reminds me of some trippy 70s psychedelia with drum machines and spacy synth sweeps. Agnivok is also a peculiar mixture of apocalyptic folk, electronics and experimentalism, actually sounding quite interesting. The 10th track is just "one minute of silence for the memory of all those who violently lost their lives in the middle east conflict." Well, I won't comment on that one. The last track is a long improvisation by The Crossfishes which features a lot of musicians from the Israeli underground. Electronics, percussion, instruments, voices, objects etc. Somehow reminds me of some early Za Siodma Gora stuff, but not that interesting. All in all, the good tracks on this disc are a minority, but it's still nice to become acquainted with a new scene via this sort of a release. (J)
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V/A The Outsider - An Aural Channelling of H.P. Lovecraft CDr

Somnambulant Corpse Recordings

Here's a nice compilation from an up-and-coming U.S. label. The theme of this compilation is H.P. Lovecraft and even though that might suggest a more darkwave/synth leaning, this disc only includes some really obscure dark ambient tracks. Most of the featured artists, such as Tugend, Axone, Bestia Centauri (along with Axone featured with two tracks), When Joy Becomes Sadness, Post Scriptvm, The Hollowing and Kuru are fairly new U.S. based projects, but also included are Murderous Vision and Schloss Tegal who should be more widely known. Despite being new acts, most of the tracks here are top notch quality showing great potential for the future. The material ranges from really deep dark ambient soundscapes (Tugend) to some more abstract experiments (When Joy Becomes Sadness) and almost noisy harsh ambience (Kuru). This is a surprisingly well balanced compilation with no excessively weak tracks nor tracks which would clearly stand above the rest; thus it's quite enjoyable to listen through the disc without paying too much attention to the fact that it's a compilation. A nice release that comes in a DVD box with a full colour cover. (J)

V/A 2002 Northern California Noise Festival CDr Super Art Media

This could also be called "If Opera's Not Your Thing...", but that other title sounds better. 16 bands doing live noise. The cover doesn't offer much information. No dates, exact location etc. There is band and track listing. Some really hard and brutal noise is offered by Sickness, Xome, Stimbox and some others. There is a bit more experimental and some even rather musical "free-noise" performed with instruments. Variation is good and the length of the tracks is usually around 4 minutes, so good to listen to and you get to know a dozen new artists. At least I did. CDr is factory duplicated with professional label printing and full color covers. (M)

V.D. "Just as Pretty" CDr Cathartic Process

Joint effort of Sickness and Taint. 4 tracks of harsh power electronics noise in the U.S. style. Thick, heavy, noisy and brutal. I think this sounds more like the material of Control than either of the bands who are actually working on this! Same kind of dark layers of heavy sound, effected vocals, buried rather deep in the mix. Some samples here and there. Very good indeed. Digitally printed covers and label artwork printed on the CDr surface. (M)

Vectorscope "Monitoring the Blind" Demo CDr

This is a project by Maor Appelbaum, the Israeli artist also working under the name Screening. Luckily this is much better material with a wider range of sound sources and a more ambient approach. Sometimes bears a bit too much of that 'new age' vibe, but is often just really deep, slowly proceeding texture of sounds. At times some electro-acoustic material comes to mind - or perhaps some 70s ambient artists - mainly because of the rather organic use of drifting melodies and other, less musical elements. Vectorscope won't threaten Chaos as Shelter's throne as Israel's best act, but is getting close. (J)

Contact: iwr@ureach.com

Vidna Obmana "Tremor" CD Release Entertainment

Much the same as with Robert Rich, I have heard quite a bit about Vidna Obmana over the years, but have actually heard very few of the many CD releases he has had out to date. Regardless, Vidna Obmana remains a well respected solo artist who is more than positively renowned for evocative ethno-ambient tracks, with more of his complex tribal ambience forming the foundation of this release. Built on a base of synthetic mid paced tribal programming, this overlaid with textural sound layers in order create a warm enveloping sound, that although quite composed overall, retains a dreamy, floating air about it. Complex layering in an evolving style is basically the key here, with sound layers being both organic and synthetic in origin. For instance there are those which can easily be picked as being programmed from a synthesiser, as can those which are organic, and with regard to the later it would appear that various types of woodwind instruments have been utilised to positive effect. And although not 'orchestral' in the true sense of the word, the synth layers could be described as being classically tinged given their replication of drawn out and droning string sounds. Other real instrumentation that appears within the mix, is that of a semi-composed guitar tunes, but the guitar is not at all as a lead instrument, but rather in the form of yet another reverberating element to the build depth and breadth of the track. Despite containing 11 tracks in total, there is a singular direction and atmosphere that floats through the consciousness of the compositions, each track interlacing with the previous and following track to create a continual evolution of the ethno oriented atmospheres. By and large this is a quality release that while not specifically dark, encompasses a bleak aura in a warm enveloping guise. (R)

Viodre "Uuee Serve Me High" CDr Cathartic Process

When I put this CDr in my CD player, I was blown away by the great sounding massive harsh noise. The first couple of dozen seconds is silent electronics, but then accompanied with a slowly rising feedback begins a brutal noise blast. Sound is very good and crisp with multiple layers of frantic noise chaos. The first track is the best one, especially the magnificent beginning. I think the power doesn't last for a full playing time and there are some moments when you hear distant drum rhythm under layers of noise and for my ears it sounds out of place. There are many tracks and also variation, so it's not same all the time, but I'd say if you enjoy multi-layered, heavy and thick noise, this is for you. The CDr is very professional with on-body label printing, full color cover and x-ray in each CDr (M)

Virologic "[[[Bugged]]]" 3" mCD Power & Steel

First up it is worth noting that Virologic is actually a side project of German heavy electronics/ dark ambient group Predominance. As for this release the concept is based on the construction, deconstruction and corruption of sounds when processed and

encoded through a computer program medium – hence the title "[[[bugged]]]". With respect of the actual music here the single 18 minute track is presented as a slow evolving piece of glitched ambience. Loops, digital textures and subtle waves of sound are the predominant aural palate, but have been composed and collated in such a way as it sounds much more engaging than mere sound experimentation for the sake of itself alone. Overall an interesting snippet of music but I wonder how well it would hold up if it spanned a whole album? Limited to 500 copies. (R)

Von Thronstrahl "E Pluribus Unum" CD Cold Spring Records

This being the second CD for Von Thronstrahl, it may not be as focused as the debut, however there is good reason for this, essentially lying in the fact that this CD is not an album proper, rather a collection of material lifted from previous compilation CDs, limited vinyl releases and other assorted re-mixes and unreleased tracks. Likewise not as overtly bombastic as its predecessoring album, this is also related to the general periods that these tracks were composed and recorded. "Bells" opens the CD (being a reworking of the main riff from legendary Australian rock band AC/DC's song "Hell's Bells") coming across quite well, with stately percussion, guitars and of course a myriad of chiming bells. Second track "Mitternachtsbier" represents the track which first introduced me to the then rising project, when they were featured on the "Riefenstahl" compilation. Slow and heavy percussion, accented by brooding main piano tune and harsh rasping vocals made this a powerful introduction to the project and has lost none of its initial power by being featured here. The increasing use of musical layering to build orchestral movements is clearly apparent on "Intronsation" (a track from 1998), here resulting in a sweeping symphonic quality. A reworking of the "Thorak" compilation track "Fahnenrager" is particularly powerful, commencing with subdued orchestral sentiments and central piano line that increase in tension to match the increasing urgency of the vocal sample used (Rainer Maria Rilke's poem "Comet" read by Oskar Werner). Tracks "Verin(sam)k" and "Victoria (I)" are two tracks featured here lifted from a prior 1999 10" ep "Sturmzeit"; the former centring mainly on stately non musical loops to create an intense sound; with the latter pointing directly to the militant and heavy orchestral sound of debut album. "Victoria (II)", is a subdued reworking of the preceding track, most evidently removing the bombastic percussion and introducing an acoustic guitar to follow the main tune (also including crowd samples and era recordings). The theme of presenting a calm acoustic guitar reworking follows through to "Turn the Centuries"; the main vocals also being overhauled with a grating and rasping delivery; also including spoken sections (both male and female). Built on aggressive looped orchestral samples "Das Neue Reich" is a powerful (yet short) offering, subsequently leading into the militant and brooding classical sentiments of "Hail You Captain and Thy Guard" (a track dedicated to Captain Codreanu and The Iron Guard). "Path of St Michael" raises a heavier bombastic flag again, using a quite rigid frame complete with meandering tuneful elements. As for the reworked version of "Under the Mask of Humanity", here it is built around the guitars recorded at the groups controversial appearance in Leipzig 2000, yet the guitar part seems to have only been included in order to dredge up reference to this event, rather than enhancing the song itself (the electric guitar playing sounds surprisingly unprofessional and does not really fit into the whole direction and mix of the song). Regardless, "Lawrence of Arabia" is quite a good track, being a sweeping melodramatic composition built around a fleeting middle eastern flutes, piano, and string movements. As for the final album track ("This is Europe not L.A."), as is stated on the cover, the composition is a sound collage, whereby a cut up soundscape of sampled traditional marching hymns is presented in order "to lead our comrades back the European roots, forward into a future that will be written by us" (In response, I will leave it up to the individual to decide how successfully the intent of such a statement has been achieved). All in all, if the debut did not set your heart ablaze this release would not really sway your opinion of Von Thronstrahl, yet if you were rather taken by their first full length the will slot more then nicely into your music collection. (R)

Vromb "Episodes" CD Ant-Zen

Over the years by virtue of simply having too much music to listen to, I confess that I have never succumbed to the cult of Vromb - but this is not to say that I have listened to prior CDs and rejected the project, rather it is that I never have actually heard a Vromb album until now. Starting with a complex and clinical programmed piece (with an underlying sinister edge), I can't but help make a comparison to Black Lung's conspiratorial theory based debut CD - and with this being my comparative point of music reference, this is rather a large compliment. The low key clinical approach, is again in order for the 3rd track, yet her the pace is stepped up a few notches, with clicks, pops and pulses inter-linking to creating a driving rhythm with minimalist melody. The mid paced, dance floor drive of track 5 again sees the construction of a piece by repetitive means - creating what is essentially a minimalist arrangement built with multiple non tuneful, rhythmic layers. The hyper speed programming of track 7 works particularly well, yet retaining the minimal progression approach (here sounding akin to the streaming of computer data), whilst on the other hand track 9 really solidifies the direction and atmosphere of the CD with a mid paced swirling and pulsing and composition offset with a quirky blip oriented tune. Likewise with the predominant album theme being that of rhythmic minimalism, another potential comparison that could be bantered around would be the current direction of Ophx - and of course this is again a large compliment in the humble opinion of yours truly. Track 15 is another standout piece, continually building and evolving, but at the same time retaining a subtle flow and evolution to the programmed beats, swirling electronics textures, bleeps, blips and random sounds. Whilst I might not be able to give an adequate comparison of this album in relation to prior efforts, "Episodes" remains an impressive release to my virgin Vromb ears. (R)



Whitehouse "Bird Seed" CD Susan Lawly

This album was released rather suddenly. I had not followed what happened after the "Cruise", and when I heard of a new CD coming, I was like "again new Whitehouse??". But this was the most positive surprise I have had with Whitehouse. "Cruise" was very good. I liked it. But when I hit this to my stereos, it was an instant hit! 1st track "Why You Never Became a Dancer" is musically only one layer of rhythmic electric sound and vocals, but the intense lyrics contribute so much depth to the result. "Wriggle Like a Fucking Eel" is obviously the hit of Whitehouse. It was earlier released as a 12" single. A side had the album version and B-side an extended instrumental. I didn't buy it until the same time as this CD. This track crushes all the remaining content of the CD and basically remains as most intense power electronics track I have heard for long time. Excellent lyrics with good vocals. It's not full power shouting all the time. It starts with almost talking and gets louder and louder, ending up to high pitched screaming. All words are pronounced well and I must credit Whitehouse for having longer and more interesting lyrics than in their early career. Song is also composed well. Electronic rhythm is combined to high pitched sounds which remind bag pipes driven through distortion, but should be just synthesizer. Sounds are not non-stop. There is excellent breaks with some sounds, leaving more space for certain vocal fragments, until hitting back with full power. This is really more of a "song" than most noise tracks. "Philosophy" is an over 9 minute song of droning feedback and analog synth sounds with echoing spoken word on the top. Even if the sound is painful, in atmosphere it is calmer. Like the whole album. Sound is clean, yet extreme. "Bird Seed" is a spoken word collage by Peter Sotos. I've heard someone say it distracts to have 15 minutes of victims cut ups between the actual music. And some others said it's so expected and getting old when you know what's coming. But I can tell I have no problems. With pleasure I'll listen to this. But I think this "1st section" before the break is the better half of the album. The last 2 tracks of the album do not rise to the same level. "Cut Hands Has the Solution" is musically nothing else than one drum machine bass-drum beat. Vocals are shout over the clean and slow "tum - tum - tum - ..." style beat which hits 2 times each second. Vocals are good, and so are the lyrics, but this minimal music/noise was not a good decision in my opinion. It surely draws more attention to the words, though. Last track "Munkis Munkond" is almost instrumental. 3 layers of electronics sounds. Flanged synth, strange electronics beats etc. Overall sound is like in "Cruise" and other recent works. Very clean and very mechanic, but "Bird Seed" is even more rhythmic I think. Still, one of the landmarks in Whitehouse's career, and essential for any record collection! (M)
Contact: www.susanlawly.com

Wilt "Amidst a Spacious Fabric" CD Ad Noiseam

So the relative newcomer Wilt has already returned with his 3rd CD and on a 3rd label! Whilst this glut of material could potentially render more harm than good to a new artist, thankfully in the case of Wilt, each successive album has turned out to be more impressive than the last. Again showcasing why they are one of the leaders of the new wave of U.S. artists, Wilt create ultra dense, yet highly atmospheric soundscapes of slow morphing dark ambience. Despite giving a general nod towards the definitive "Hersey" era of pioneering act Lustmord, Wilt possess enough ideas and characteristics of its own - often by virtue of sound sources utilized. In regard to this album Wilt have used a multi strunged instrument called a "zither" as the main sound source element, yet in most part rendering it impossible to detect the origin of these sampled sounds (apart from some sections where scrapping, plucking and tapping of the strings can be heard, thus giving the CD a nice organic touch to the swirling mass of enveloping reverberations). Combining all this with inventive compositions (some subtle and slow, others more structured and urgent) this is no doubt a bleak journey for the ears to traverse. So with 11 (untitled) tracks in all, and with a play time of 64 minutes, the album presents a more than ample array of dense sound transmissions from the abyss to immerse yourself in. Wilt, not to be content with their current profile, would seem to forging ahead with further multiple releases, including a collaborative project with rising act Tarmvred and no less than 4 more albums slated for release on as many labels! Let's just hope the quality will remain to a positively high standard. (R)

XhM2 "This Anxious Space" CD Ant-Zen

This CD, if you did not work it out from the title, is actually a collaborative effort between the cinematic electronica of Xingu Hill and the experimental electronic cut up style of Squameter. Composed in an evocative yet rather abstract cutting edge type way, the first two tracks sort of act as a quirky, cut up, static and "blip-hop" type prelude to the more musically composed track three. This third piece "Dreadful Menace" then therefore takes on a smoother dark electronica approach, with a sci-fi type aura enveloping the programmed tune. With a framework of low key ambience intermixed with static and tense cinematic cutups, the forth piece sounds both flowing and disjointed at the same time, however the sci-fi ambience returns on the fifth piece, using a droning underbelly and again dark yet smooth programmed tune. Revisiting a quirky cut up style, the sixth piece manages to run a fine line between disjointed and flowing, with the following seventh revisiting now familiar territory of a smooth programmed sci-fi tune intermixed with flowing ambience, random beats, cutups and disembodied voices. With ten tracks in all being quirky and playful, yet dark and evocative, "This Anxious Space" is another fine piece of cutting edge studio trickery from two fine Ant-Zen artists. (R)

Xombie CD

SnipSnip

Heavy synth noise here. It sounds like a rather modern digital synthesizer driven through distortion. The sound is clear and crisp and it is not so "brutal" as you can often sense the tone on the background instead of chaos. Some of the tracks are not too good as nothing happens, but others are enriched with details and good ideas. So basically what we have here is slowly waving keyboard stuff, which could be ambient if it wouldn't been driven through distortion. (M)

Xome "Blackness (Parts 1-4)" Card CDR PACrec

This is very fast harsh noise. Whirlwind electronics mess and fast paced changes of total noise sound, short grinding loops, some violent feedback, etc. I assume tons of effect boxes and quick hands turning knobs. There are no real traces of original sound sources, just a painful result of effect boxes. Neither is there any big difference between parts 1-4. In fact, I have no idea when they change. It's only one track on this. Another good release from the Troniks side label. (M)

Xome "Bolt, Party, Goodbye Yesterday and Hello Tomorrow, Sushi" CDRs Negatron

Four CDRs by this globetrotting mad man. This is harsh noise served up Japanese style. Thick sounds, lots of pedals and lots of full on force. I am glad more quality noise is being made, it seemed like there was a falling off of quality noise in the last couple of years and these four releases just show you that there is something really great going on in San Francisco. (A)
Contact: www.negatron.com

Xome "Itch" CDR

SnipSnip

Hmm... another CDR from Xome! Two of the tracks are long ones. 10 and 16 minutes, the rest between 1-4. It's harsh noise from San Francisco, California, and if you are willing to experience the restless storm of effect and distortion pedals, Xome will deliver that to you. Over one hour of fast paced and well made pedal noise released by a new CDR label who sells this for the very cheap price of 4\$/U.S., 6\$/world, though you'll be getting rough xeroxed covers which aren't exactly even in CD size. (M)

Yama Akago "TokyaBay the Cherry Blossom Season" 3"CDR Sewer Records

A very limited small disc of Japanese experimental female vocals. They start a little experimental, but end up rather standard quiet and peaceful vocal drones with plenty of echo. 2 tracks, less than 18 minutes. It works like this, but for a full length I'd expect something else besides vocals. (M)

Yen Pox / Troum "Mnemonic Induction" CD Malignant Records

Representing the long awaited collaboration between two of the biggest acts of the dark ambient/ drone scenes, 2002 is the year that witnessed this album's final release. Housed in an 8 panel digipack, the deep orange/ yellow colour and flowing topographic styled line artwork of the cover is actually a rather apt visual description for the warmth of enveloping sounds contained within the 62 minute of the album. 4 compositions of catatonic pace are spread across the length of the CD, each flowing and linking into the next, rather than representing separate and individual tracks. Containing a yawning and cavernous aural aesthetic, passages of murky tonal depths are skillfully inter-linked with sections of spiralling sonic clarity. Likewise muted swelling melodies occasionally reveal themselves within the sonic miasma adding to the complex melange of sound skillfully woven into an all enveloping sonic tapestry. Thus it is whilst listening to such impregnated sounds (and pondering potential inspiration), one gains the feeling that a half remembered thread of archaic consciousness and spirituality has been the driving influence for the atmospheres created. Yes, such music as this does transcend simplistic appreciation, essentially tapping into something primordial, something deep within the organic fabric of humanity's origins.

Overall I would say that this collaborations sees the two groups presenting a sound that is almost the exact middle ground for the two. One the one hand the music is not as "blood red" and dark as what you would expect from Yen Pox, yet on the other hand it does inhabit a sonic density that exudes a certain darkness not totally affiliated with the sound of Troum. Nonetheless a classic album for drone and dark ambient fanatics alike. (R)

Zer0-sum "Ad Infinitum" CDR Cyber Blast Records

The biggest credit of the artist behind Zer0-sum so far has been the label of "the boy friend of Richard Ramirez", but if people expect similar harsh noise brutality, they are wrong. Zer0-sum presents you keyboard ambient. For my ears it sounds pretty much as decent as all the rest keyboard ambient bands. Maybe his sound is a little more flat than of those who use the most expensive keyboards, but it's still very good. Here are slowly waving sounds and chords of pre-set keyboard sounds. For me this kind of stuff works as a movie soundtrack, but if I listen to an ambient record, I don't like "keyboard music". The lucky thing is that Zer0-sum is not really melodic all the time. It's never disharmonic, but at it's best the chords are so slowly drifting that you can hardly follow any melody or structure. Some of the musical tracks are in fact good, like track #7, which is very good sounding. At the worst you'll be hearing less than mediocre melodic keyboard music, which sounds like nothing more than someone doing finger practice on keyboards. One dimensional, flat and useless. Fans of Runes Order and such stuff could like this, but I can't listen to keyboard music for long. 11 tracks in c. 66 minutes, should have been cut to half and this CDR would have become A LOT better. Slimcase with color ink print covers. (M)



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